MAKOTO YUKIMURA

VINLAND SAGA

BOOK·NINE

VINLAND
SAGA

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VINLAND SAGA

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He hired Askeladd, leader of a band of mercenaries, to ambush Thors, and Askeladd slew him before Thorfinn's eyes. After that, Thorfinn worked as a member of Askeladd's group in the English War, all for a chance to avenge his father and kill his new leader.

Years later in England, as a young man, Thorfinn encountered Sigvaldi's brother, the former Jomsviking captain Thorkell. Thorkell broke free from the Jomsvikings to plunge himself into war more deeply, joining the English side as a mercenary.

Thorfinn ultimately ended up clashing with Thorkell over control of Prince Canute, second son of the Danish king. When he defeated Thorkell in combat, he gained the epithet "Karlsefni," or "promising." His legend grew from there, but after Askeladd's death, he found himself a slave, and worked on Ketil's farm in Denmark for four years. In 1018, he regained his freedom and returned to Iceland for the first time in 16 years. After his many tribulations, Thorfinn found the same ideals as Thors, and swore to build a peaceful land without war and slavery, named Vinland.

Thorfinn then left on a voyage to Greece to raise the funds for his expedition. On his crew was Leif, an expert sailor who was first to land on Vinland's shores; Einar, a fellow former slave and sworn brother to Thorfinn; Bug-Eyed Thorfinn, Leif's apprentice; Gudrid, a would-be bride who fled from her wedding; and Hild, a hunter whose father Thorfinn killed, and who claims the right over his life and death.

THE STORY THUS FAR: THORFINN AND THE JOMSVIKINGS

The Jomsvikings were a fearsome band of highly-skilled warriors and raiders that made a name for themselves all over Northern Europe from their home in Jomsborg.

Their chieftain, Sigvaldi, married his own daughter Helga to one of his most fearsome captains: Thors, the "Troll of Jom."

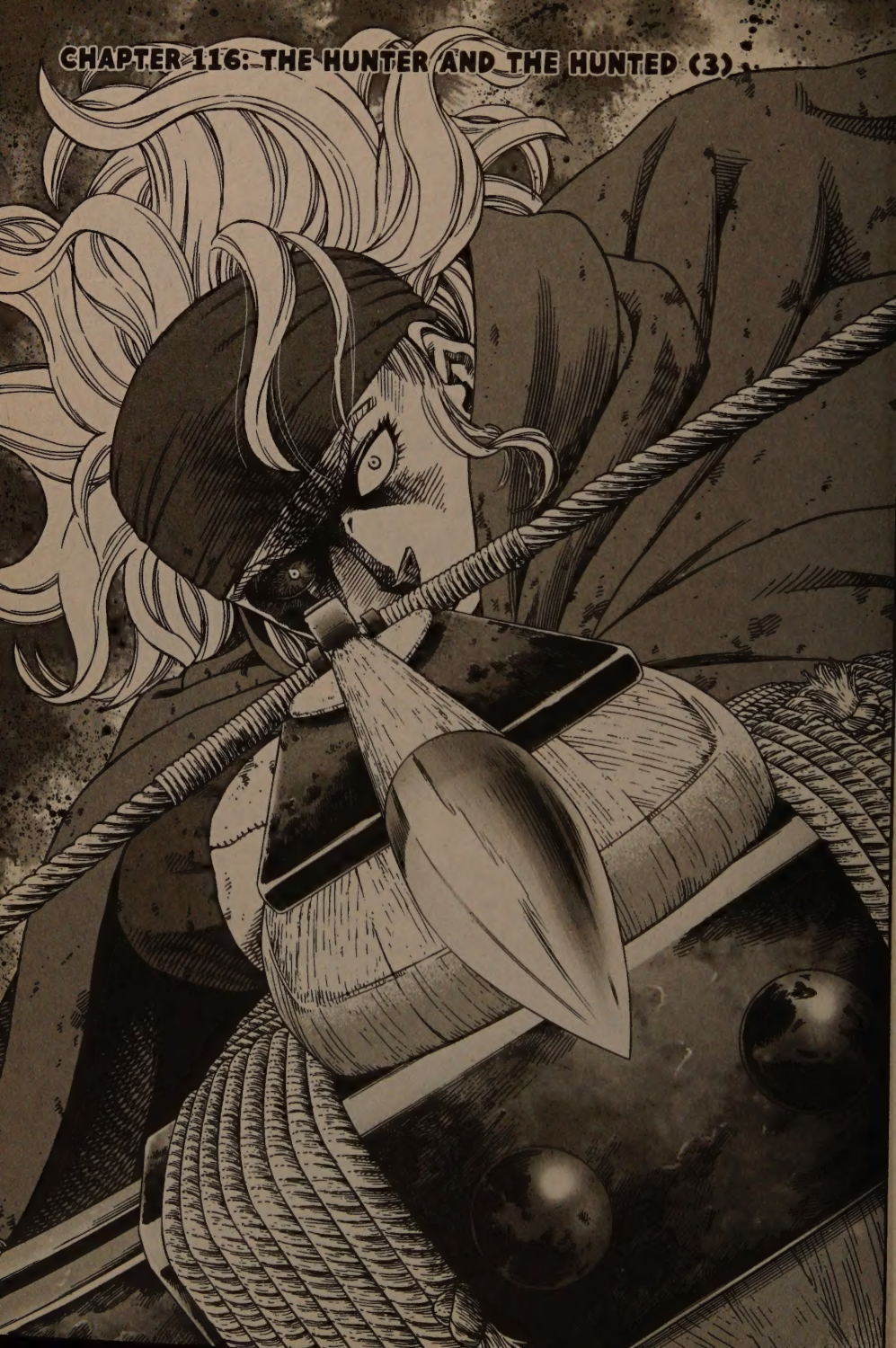
Over time, Thors began to have doubts about his life of war and violence, and in the Battle of Hjörungavágr in 987, he faked his own death, and took Helga and their daughter Ylva with him into hiding. After they settled in Iceland, they then had a son, Thorfinn.

n the year 1002, Thorfinn was six when the Jomsviking captain, Floki, arrived at their village. Floki asked Thors to return to the band to aid in the nearby war between England and Denmark. Thors set sail, unable to refuse, and soon found that Thorfinn had stowed away aboard his ship.

ut along the voyage, Floki had set a trap.

VINLAND SAGA

CHAPTER 116: THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (3)



!
DAMN.

KSLATCH
FWUP
THORFINN!!

GRAB
THUMP

FWAAAAH HYAAAGH

THORFINN! PUT DOWN THE BABY AND STAND UP, ALONE!

YOU! THE BIG OGRE! GET AWAY FROM THORFINN, SLOWLY!

WHA-? ME?!

BUG-EYES, JUST DO SOME-THING!!

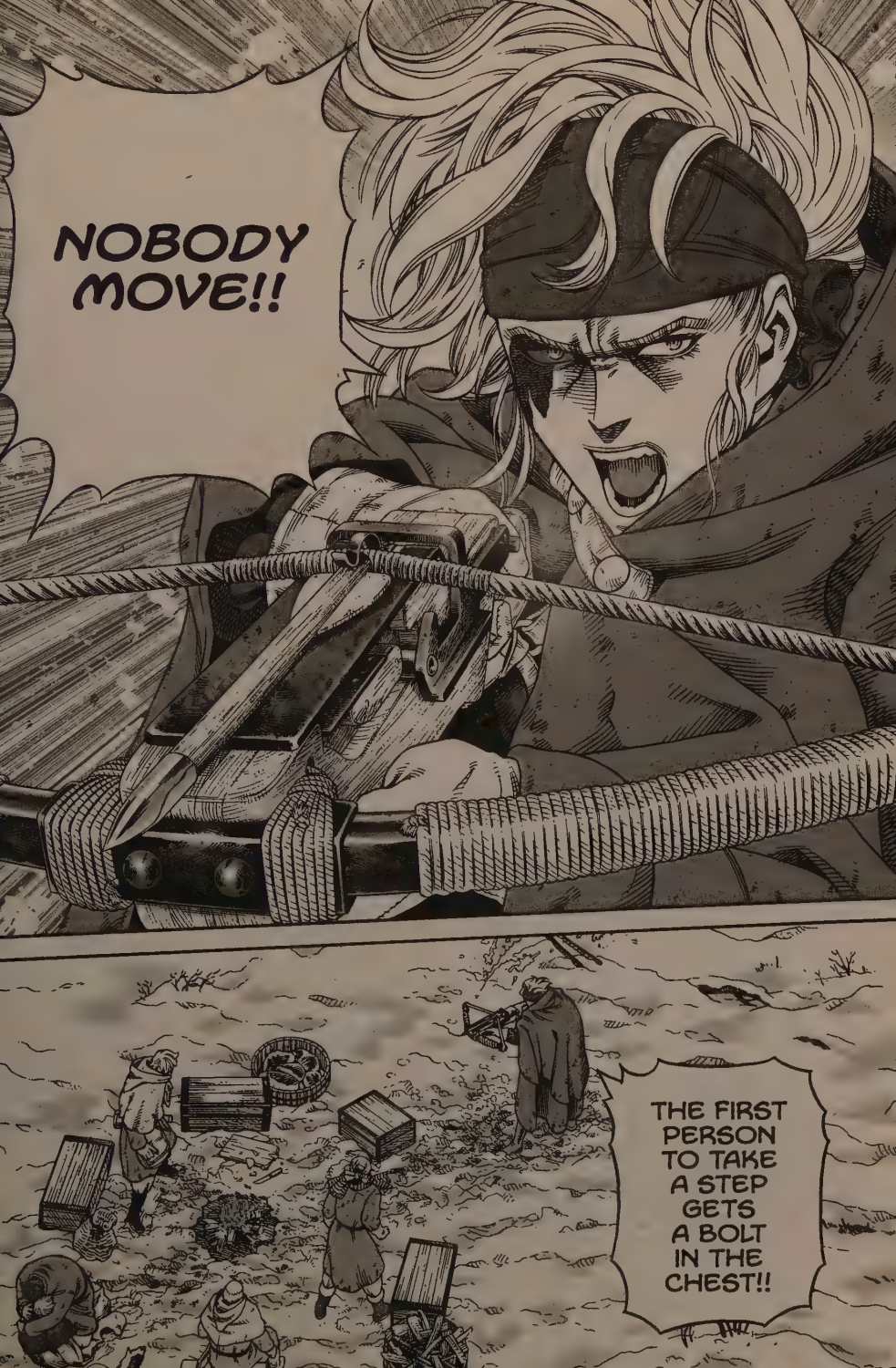
...AND YOU'LL HAVE A THIRD NOSTRIL.

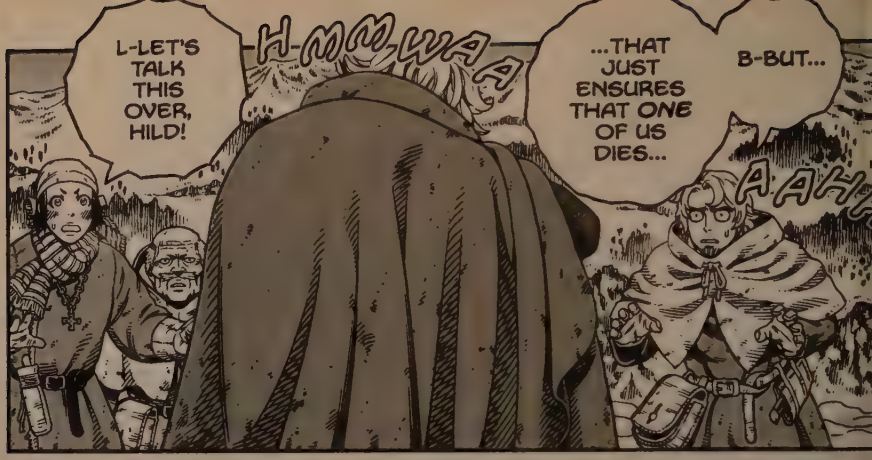
MAKE ONE MORE MOVE...

LIKE WHAT...?

UM...

YAARH...


NOBODY MOVE!!
THE FIRST PERSON TO TAKE A STEP GETS A BOLT IN THE CHEST!!


L-LET'S TALK THIS OVER, HILD!
H-MM-WA
...THAT JUST ENSURES THAT ONE OF US DIES...
B-BUT...
A-AHH

WHY DO YOU PROTECT THORFINN?

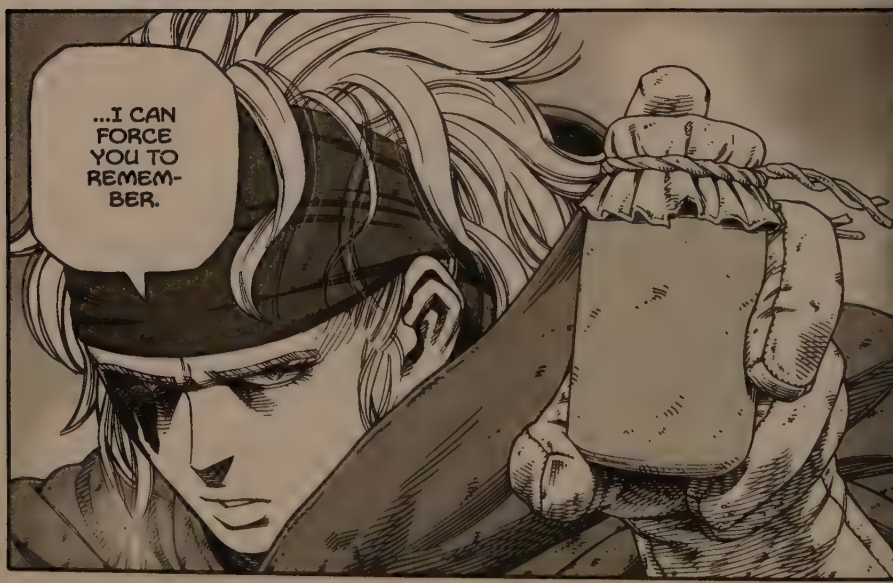
HANG
WAAAA

HE IS A MURDEROUS BEAST.
AND I AM A HUNTER WHOSE JOB IS TO EXTERMINATE THOSE THAT THREATEN PEOPLE.

FWAAAAGH
SHUT UP!! LET HER DO IT!!
LET GO OF ME, EINAR!! SHE'LL SHOOT YOU!!
I WON'T LET YOU DIE!
YOU'RE TOO IMPORT-ANT TO DIE HERE!!
IF SHE SHOOTS ME, THAT'S YOUR CHANCE!
THE REST OF YOU CAN PIN HER DOWN BEFORE SHE LOADS ANOTHER BOLT!

SO YOU HAVE.
IN THAT CASE...
...
...
...
TSK!

...


...I CAN FORCE YOU TO REMEM-BER.

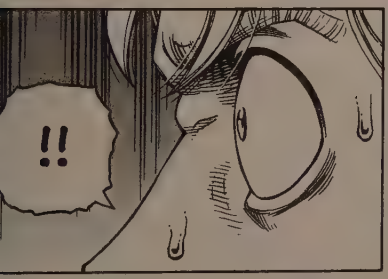
INSIDE...
LOOK CLOSELY AT THIS BOTTLE, AND RECALL.

...?

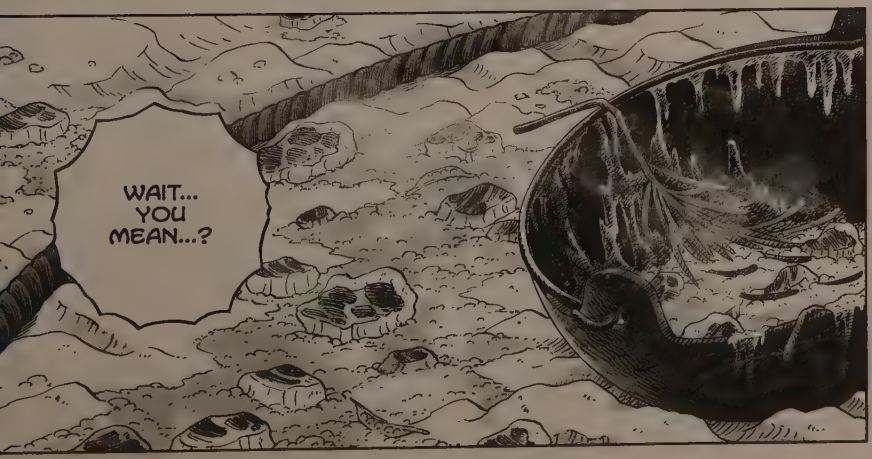
...THE PAST?
...BUT HE'S NOT LIKE THAT NOW!
L-LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST...
YOU THINK I CAN JUST DISMISS THEM AS *THE PAST?*
THE THINGS HE DID TO ME...
THE WORDS HE SAID TO ME...
YOU CANNOT TELL ME THAT YOU'VE FORGOTTEN.
I AM SURE YOU REMEMBER, THORFINN.
YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU TOLD ME THEN.

I POISONED THE STEW.
IT'S A CONCOCTION I USE TO KILL BEARS.
IT WORKS INSTANTLY WHEN APPLIED TO A BOLT HEAD.
BUT TAKEN ORALLY, IT WORKS SLOWER.
STILL, YOU'LL FEEL THE EFFECTS SOON ENOUGH.

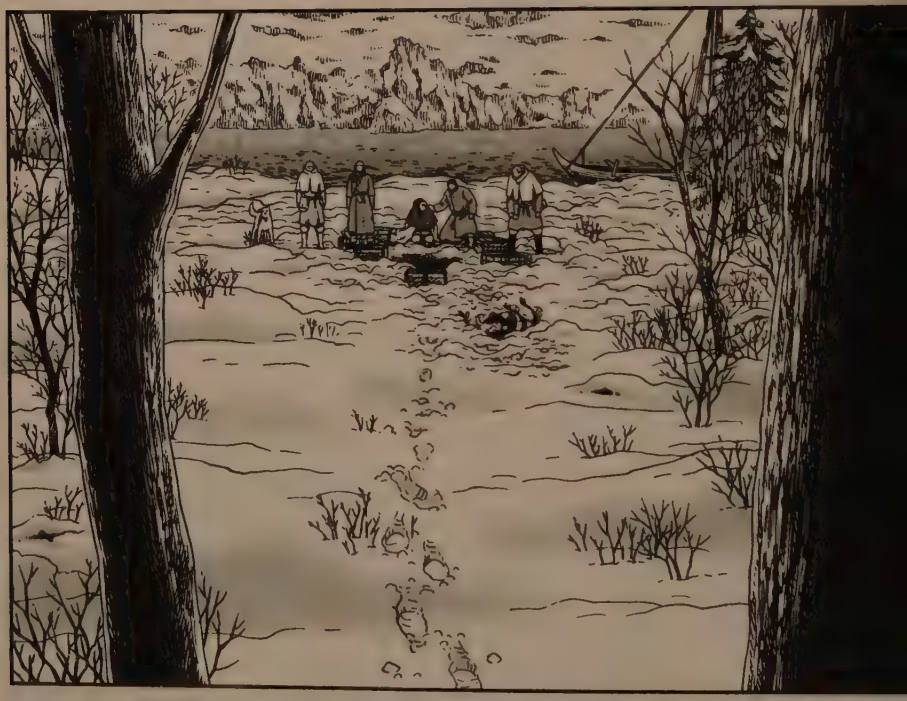
...IS AN ANTI-DOTE.

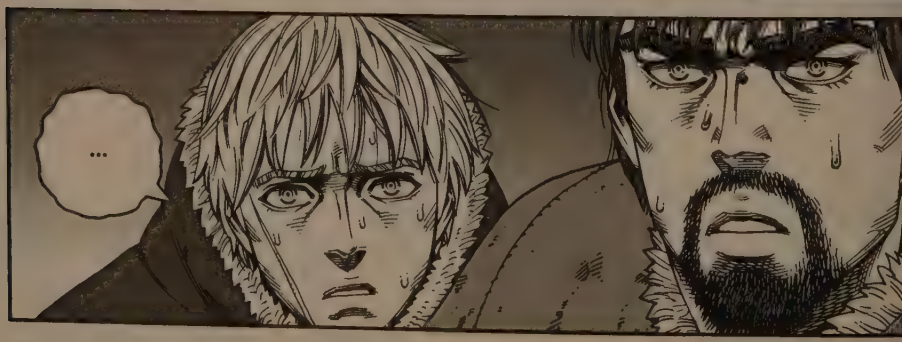

!!

ANTI...?

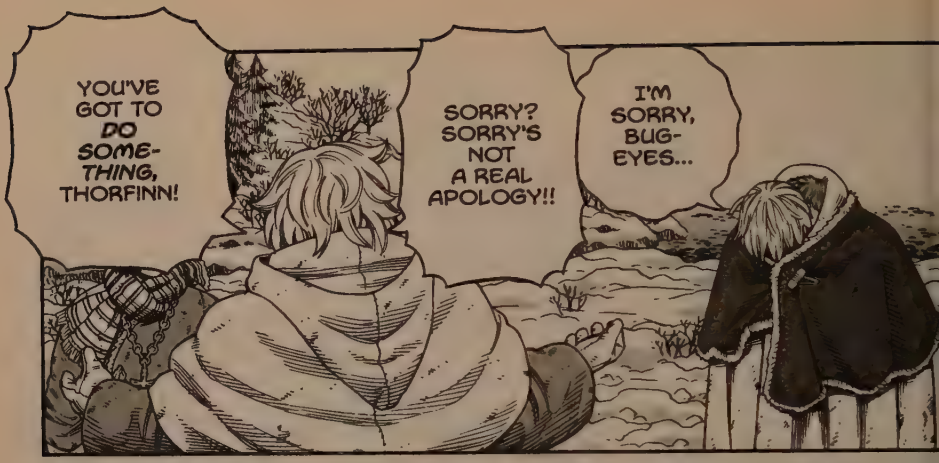

WAIT... YOU MEAN...?

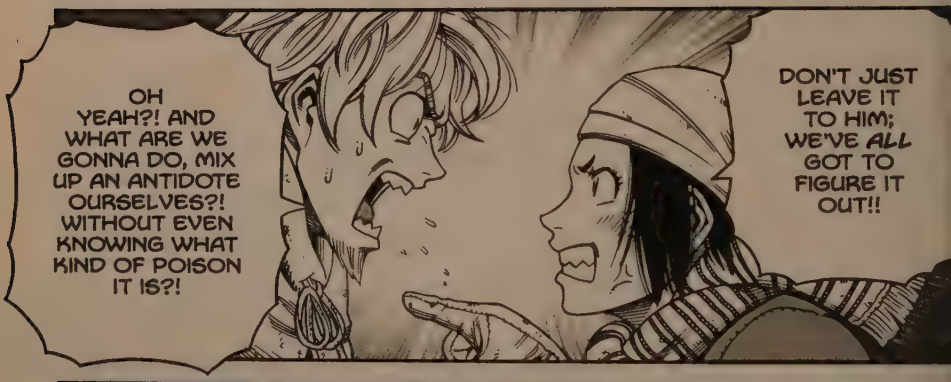
...I WILL BREAK THE JAR AND SPILL IT.
IF YOU ATTEMPT TO INTER-FERE...
THE REST OF YOU, STAY WHERE YOU ARE.



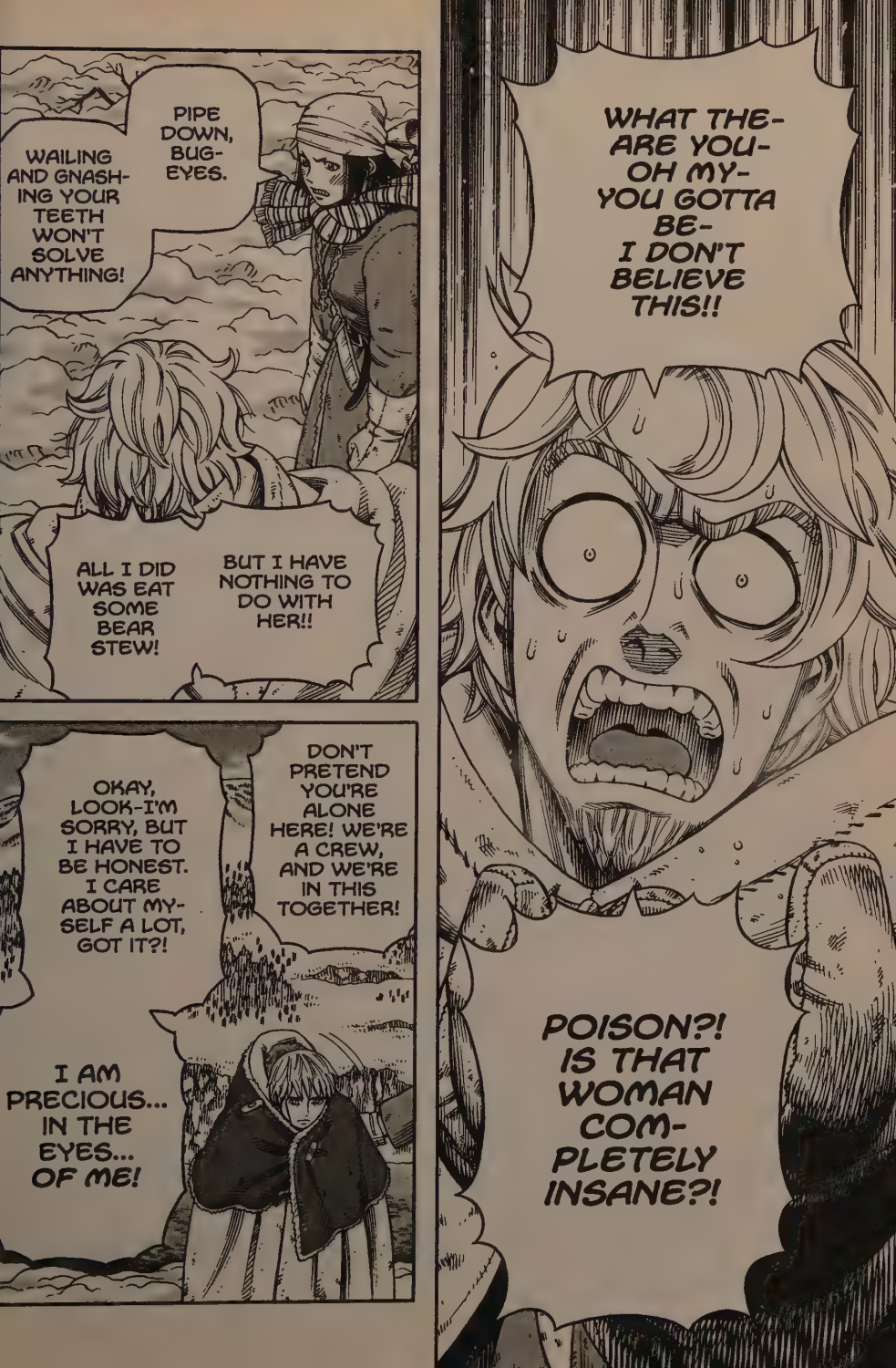

...

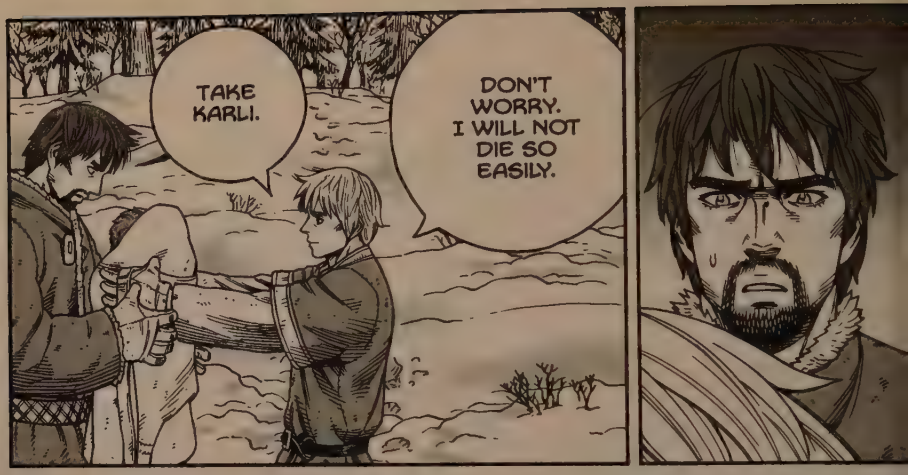
DO YOU SEE NOW?
I AM THE ONE IN CONTROL.
WHAT...?
I ATE FIVE BOWLS...
IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF YOUR COMPANIONS, YOU WILL ATTEMPT TO TAKE THE ANTIDOTE FROM ME, THORFINN.
IT WILL BE SINGLE COMBAT, MAN-TO-MAN.
ZSSHK

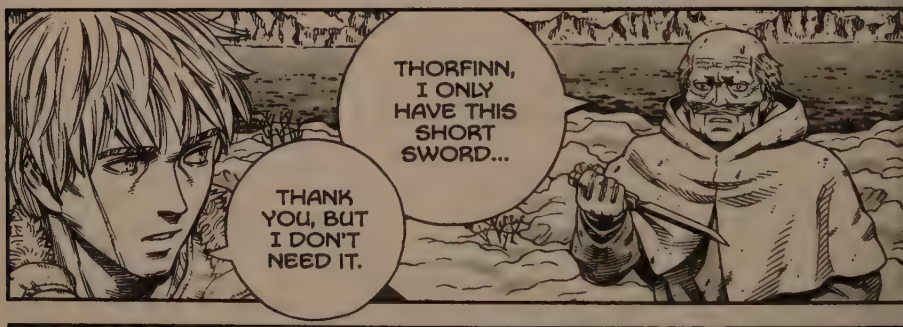

YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOME-THING, THORFINN!
SORRY? SORRY'S NOT A REAL APOLOGY!!
I'M SORRY, BUG-EYES...

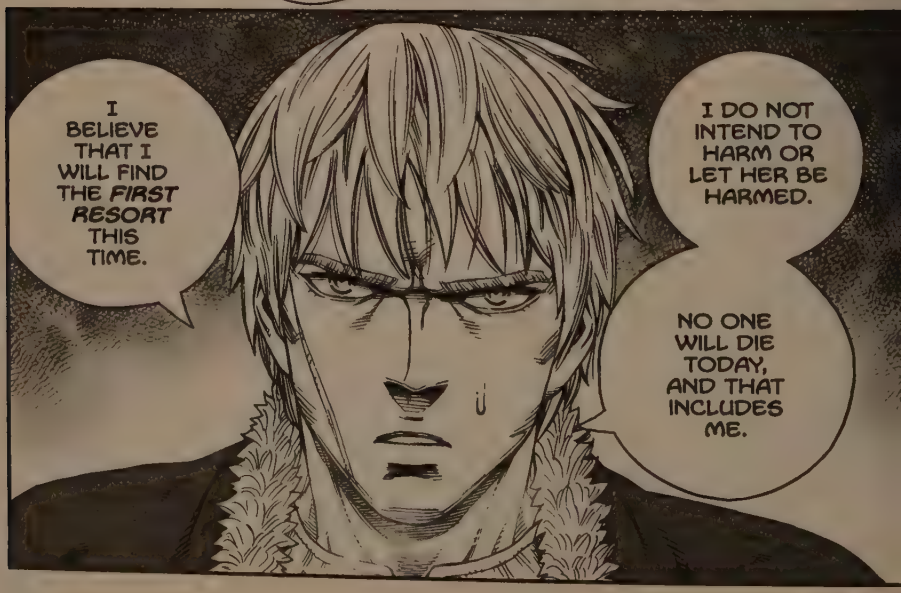

OH YEAH?! AND WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO, MIX UP AN ANTIDOTE OURSELVES?! WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING WHAT KIND OF POISON IT IS?!
DON'T JUST LEAVE IT TO HIM; WE'VE ALL GOT TO FIGURE IT OUT!!

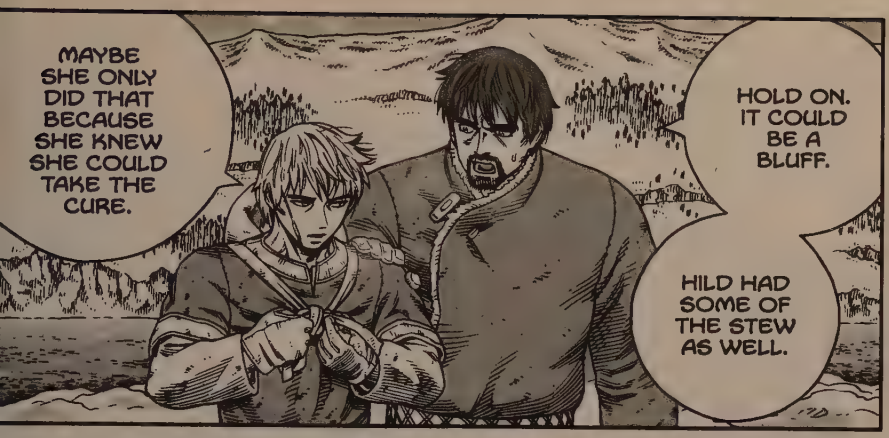
I'LL BE BACK.
TAKE CARE OF KARLI.

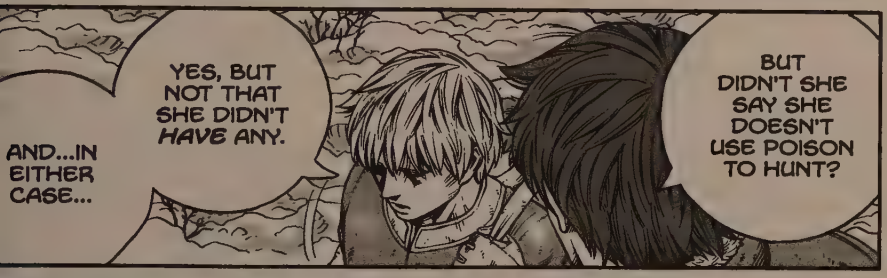

WAILING AND GNASHING YOUR TEETH WON'T SOLVE ANYTHING!
PIPE DOWN, BUG-EYES.
ALL I DID WAS EAT SOME BEAR STEW!
BUT I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HER!!
OKAY, LOOK-I'M SORRY, BUT I HAVE TO BE HONEST. I CARE ABOUT MYSELF A LOT, GOT IT?!
DON'T PRETEND YOU'RE ALONE HERE! WE'RE A CREW, AND WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER!
I AM PRECIOUS... IN THE EYES... OF ME!
WHAT THE-ARE YOU-OH MY-YOU GOTTA BE-I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!!
POISON?! IS THAT WOMAN COMPLETELY INSANE?!

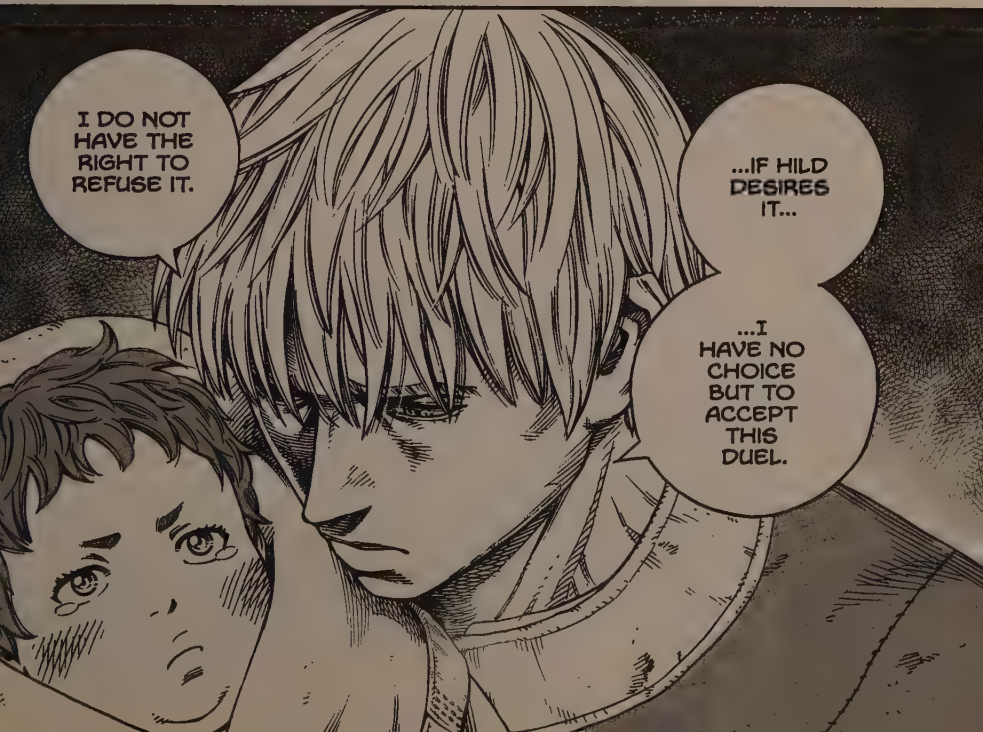

TAKE KARLI.
DON'T WORRY. I WILL NOT DIE SO EASILY.


THORFINN, I ONLY HAVE THIS SHORT SWORD...
THANK YOU, BUT I DON'T NEED IT.


I BELIEVE THAT I WILL FIND THE *FIRST RESORT* THIS TIME.
I DO NOT INTEND TO HARM OR LET HER BE HARMED.
NO ONE WILL DIE TODAY, AND THAT INCLUDES ME.


MAYBE SHE ONLY DID THAT BECAUSE SHE KNEW SHE COULD TAKE THE CURE.
HOLD ON. IT COULD BE A BLUFF.
HILD HAD SOME OF THE STEW AS WELL.


AND...IN EITHER CASE...
YES, BUT NOT THAT SHE DIDN'T *HAVE* ANY.
BUT DIDN'T SHE SAY SHE DOESN'T USE POISON TO HUNT?


I DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE IT.
...IF HILD DESIRES IT...
...I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO ACCEPT THIS DUEL.

HERE HE COMES.
ALONE... GOOD.
SHUK

I WILL RETURN SOON.

WAIT FOR ME.

ZSH

AAAH! IS IT JUST ME, OR IS MY HEAD ITCHING?

FEELS LIKE MY BODY MIGHT BE GOING NUMB!

THORFINN...

CHAPTER 117: THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (4)

AND WHEN I PUT THIS BOLT THROUGH YOUR CHEST...

...YOU *WILL* REMEMBER YOUR SIN, THORFINN.

BUT IT WAS THE SAME WITH THE BEAR.
I DON'T SENSE ANY CAUTION FROM THE ANIMALS TO SHOW THEY DETECT ANOTHER...
SHE SHOULD BE RIGHT NEARBY... BUT I DON'T SENSE HER AT ALL.
CAN YOU HEAR ME?!
HILD!
A TRUE HUNTER...

PWEEP PWEEP
CHIP CHIP...
CHIRP, CHIRRUP
PEEP PEEP PEEP...

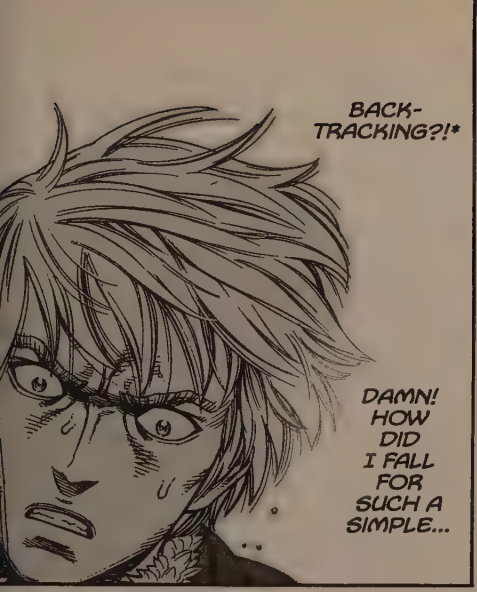
...IS THAT YOU GIVE ME THE TIME TO LIVE SO THAT I MAY ATONE FOR MY CRIME!!
I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A SELFISH THING FOR ME TO SAY! ALL I ASK OF YOU...
...
GRRK...
THE CROSS-BOW!!
GIVE THEM THE ANTID...
TIK
ALSO... MY COM-PANIONS ARE NOT RESPON-SIBLE FOR ANY OF THIS!

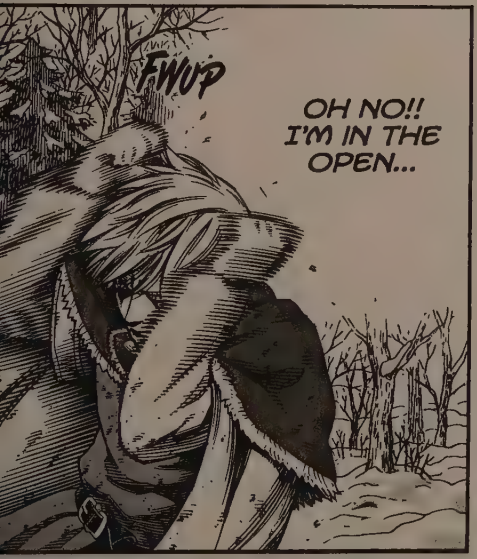
CAN YOU HEAR ME?!
CAN YOU HEAR ME?!
CAN YOU HEAR ME?!
CAN YOU HEAR ME?!
I DO NOT KNOW HOW I CAN APOLOGIZE TO YOU...OR HOW I CAN ATONE, BUT I WILL DO IT.
I HAVE DONE SOMETHING UNFORGIV-ABLE TO YOU...AND TO YOUR FAMILY.
I CANNOT AFFORD TO DIE ON THIS DAY!
BUT I WILL NOT DIE.

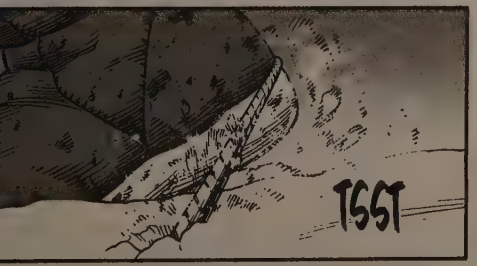
NO MATTER HOW WELL SHE HIDES HER PRESENCE, SHE'S STILL RUNNING ON SNOW.
THERE WILL BE PRINTS.
ZSH ZSH ZSH
THERE!
EVEN AN EXPERIENCED USER WILL TAKE TO THE COUNT OF TEN TO PREPARE THE NEXT BOLT.
IF I CAN CLOSE IN DURING THAT TIME...
THE BIGGEST DOWNSIDE OF THE CROSSBOW IS THE LENGTHY RELOADING TIME.

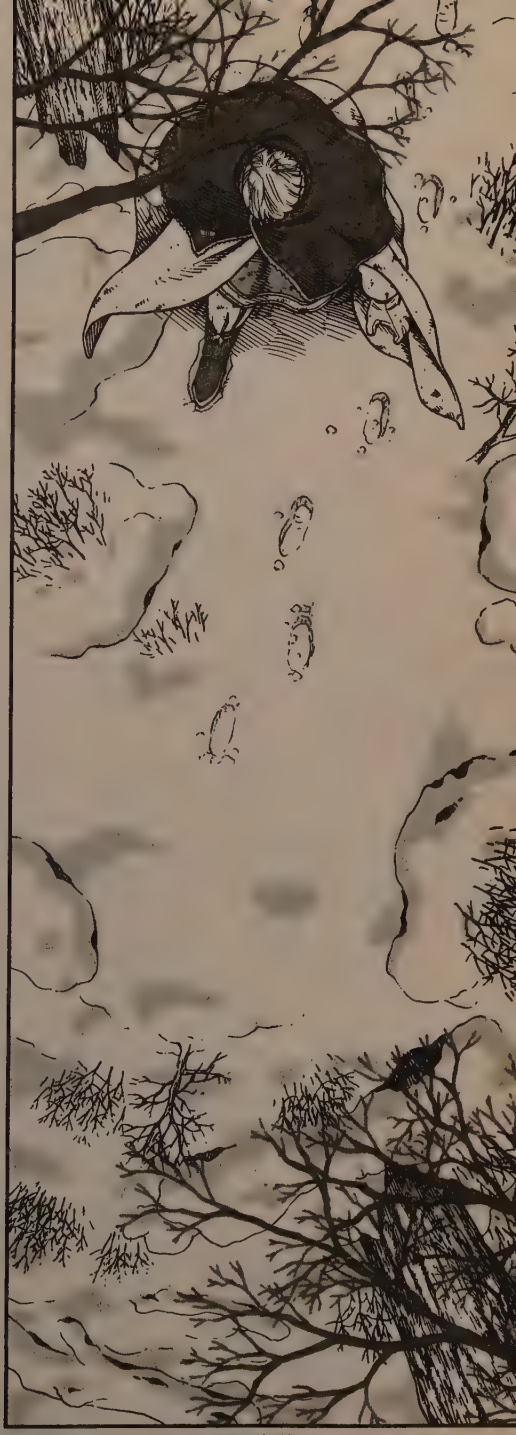
FUP
KAAANG
DAMN... DO I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO FIGHT?!
FROM THAT WAY!
I CAN'T HIT HIM UNLESS I DRAW CLOSER.
HE DODGED *AFTER* THE SOUND!
HIS REFLEXES ARE NIMBLE.

BAMM
AAAGH!
OVER THERE!!
SHE'S CLOSE!!



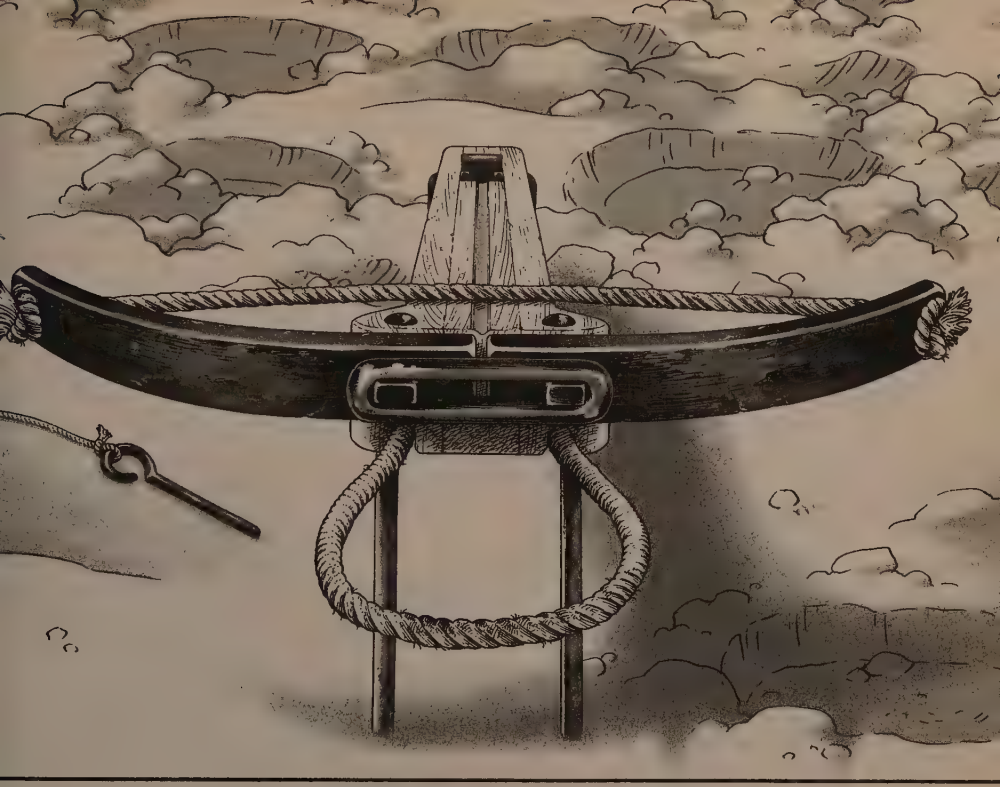




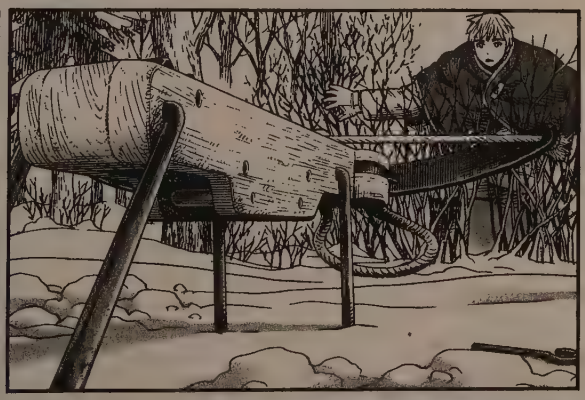


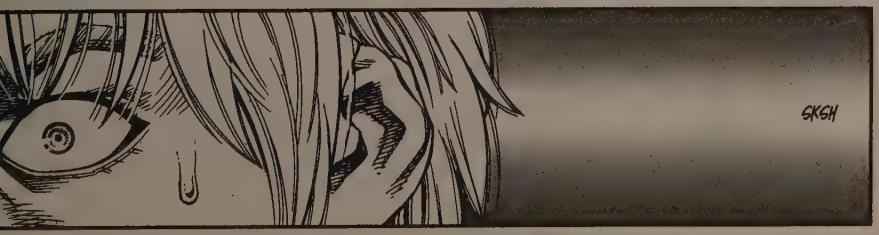
ACKTRACKING: RETRACING ONE'S STEPS IN REVERSE IN THE SNOW UNTIL THERE IS ROOM TO AP OFF THE PATH INTO UNDERGROWTH. THIS THROWS OFF PURSUERS BY MAKING THE TRAIL PPEAR TO END ABRUPTLY. SOME WILD ANIMALS LIKE BEARS DO THIS, TOO.

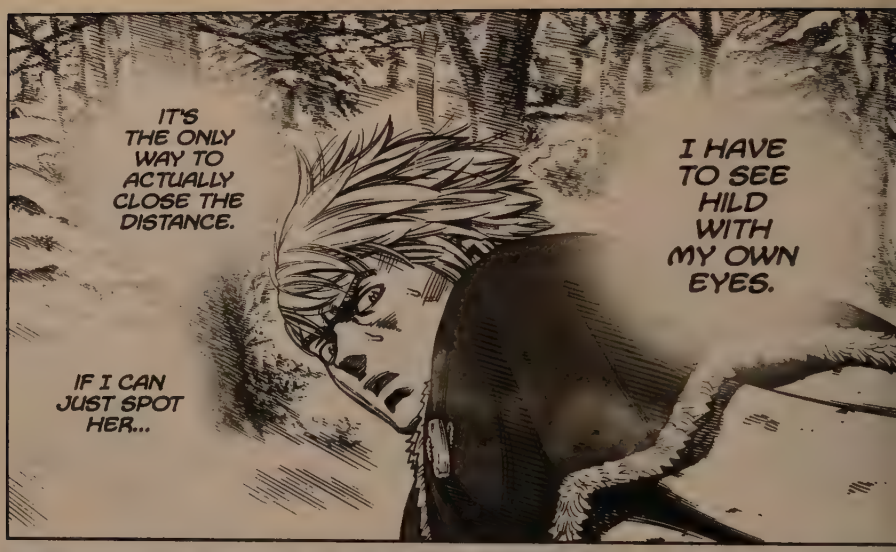
BWOOFH
NO! IT'S THAT WAY!
THE DIRECTION I JUST CAME FROM!!
SHHK
SHE KNOWS EXACTLY WHERE I AM.
WHO'S TO SAY THAT WASN'T A TRAP, TOO?!
I CAN'T GET LURED INTO HER RUSE!
NO, WAIT!
WAIT!



SHIT! HOW DID SHE SET UP...
A TRAP?!



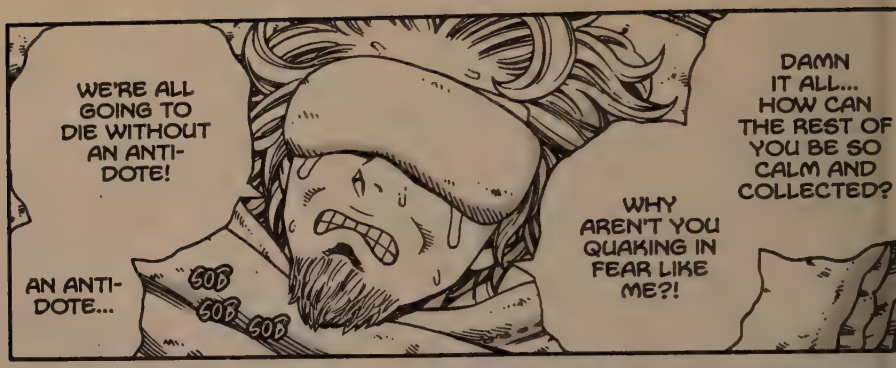

GKGH

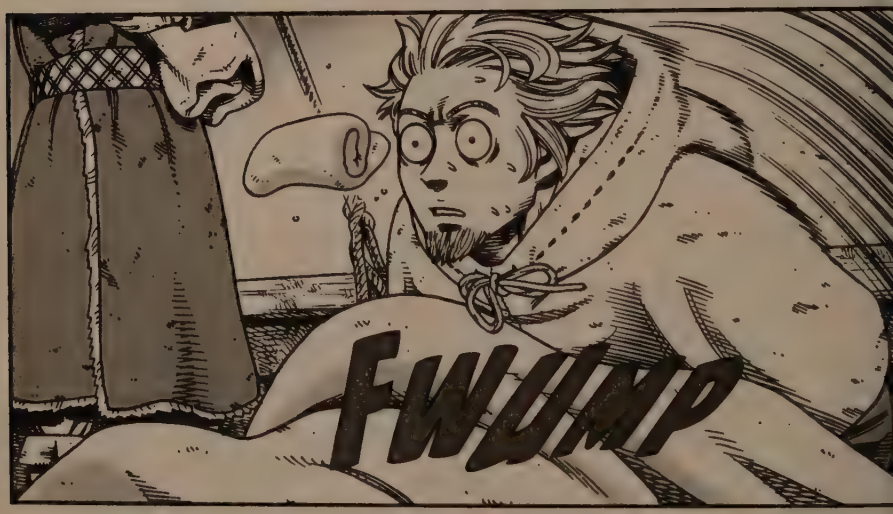

IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO ACTUALLY CLOSE THE DISTANCE.
I HAVE TO SEE HILD WITH MY OWN EYES.
IF I CAN JUST SPOT HER...

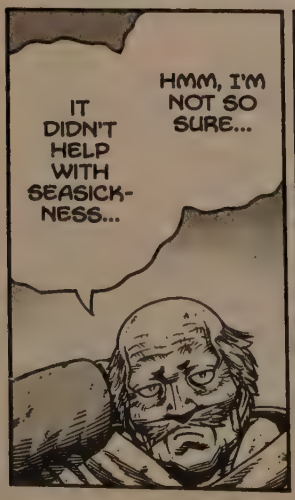
JUST THINK! HOW... HOW...
I CAN CLOSE THE EFFECTIVE SHOOTING RANGE WITHIN A COUNT OF TEN.

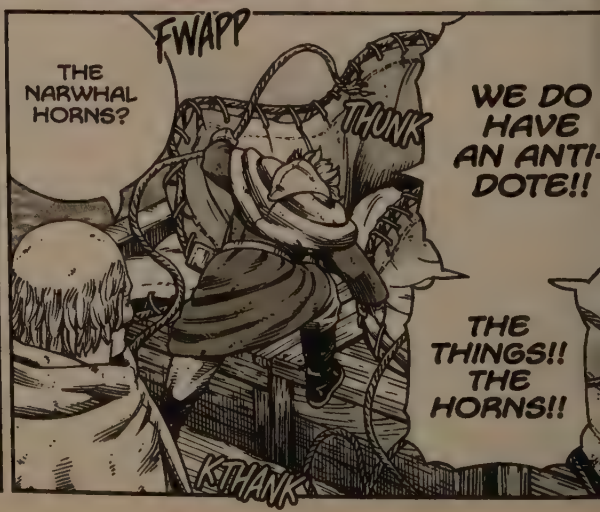
IT'S SO QUIET...
...

THIS MIGHT LAST A WHILE...
PERHAPS I SHOULD PULL BACK.
THIS WILL BE NO SIMPLE HUNT...
I CAN'T HIT HIM AT A DISTANCE.
IF I GET TOO CLOSE, HE'LL SENSE ME.

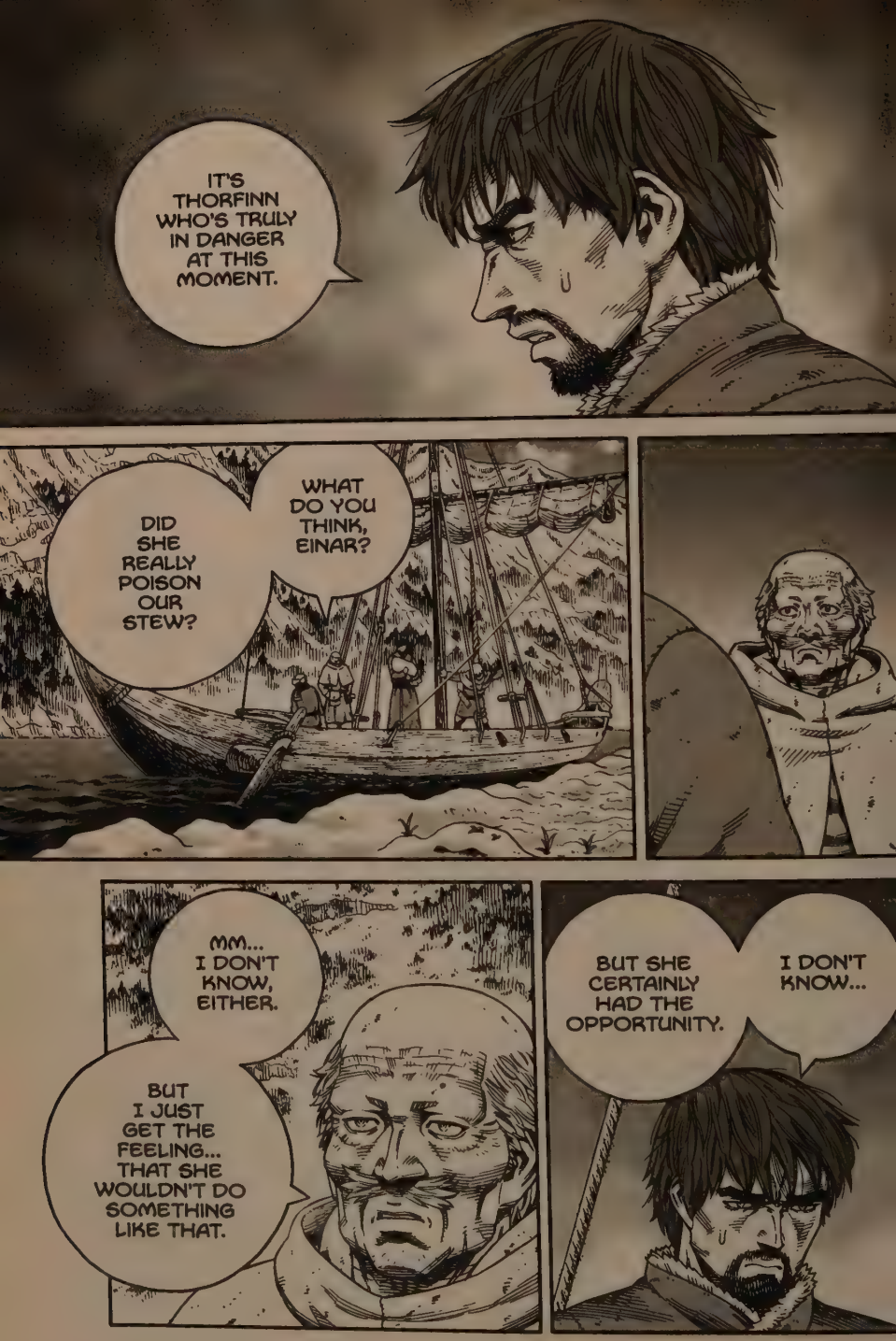

WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE WITHOUT AN ANTI-DOTE!
AN ANTI-DOTE...
SOB SOB SOB
WHY AREN'T YOU QUAKING IN FEAR LIKE ME?!
DAMN IT ALL... HOW CAN THE REST OF YOU BE SO CALM AND COLLECTED?


FWUMP


IT DIDN'T HELP WITH SEASICK-NESS...
HMM, I'M NOT SO SURE...


FWAPP
THE NARWHAL HORNS?
THUNK
KTHANK
WE DO HAVE AN ANTI-DOTE!!
THE THINGS!! THE HORNS!!

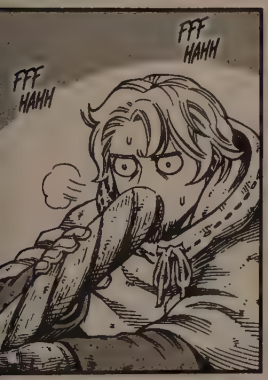
HOW DO YOU FEEL, BUG-EYES?
HURRY.
NEED ANTI-DOTE...
CAN'T MOVE.
HEAD-ACHE.
COLD.
CONGRATS! YOU'RE ALL THE LUCKY ONES! YOU GET A FEW EXTRA MINUTES TO LIVE!
BECAUSE I ATE MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE!!
IF ALL THE REST OF US ATE THE STEW TOGETHER, WHY ARE YOU THE ONLY ONE WHO SEEMS TO BE DYING?

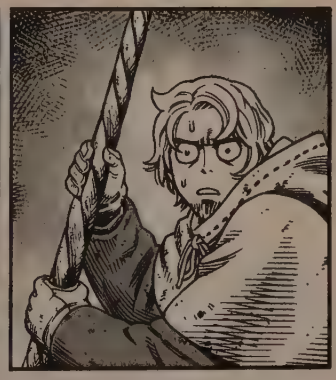

IT'S THORFINN WHO'S TRULY IN DANGER AT THIS MOMENT.
DID SHE REALLY POISON OUR STEW?
WHAT DO YOU THINK, EINAR?
MM... I DON'T KNOW, EITHER.
BUT I JUST GET THE FEELING... THAT SHE WOULDN'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
BUT SHE CERTAINLY HAD THE OPPORTUNITY.
I DON'T KNOW...

AT THE VERY LEAST, IT'S NOT MEANT TO BE GROUND INTO POWDER AND SWALLOWED, I THINK.

I DON'T KNOW HOW THE GREEKS TURN IT INTO MEDICINE.

PERHAPS THEY MIX IT WITH OTHER INGREDIENTS AND PERFORM SOME OTHER TREATMENT ON IT?



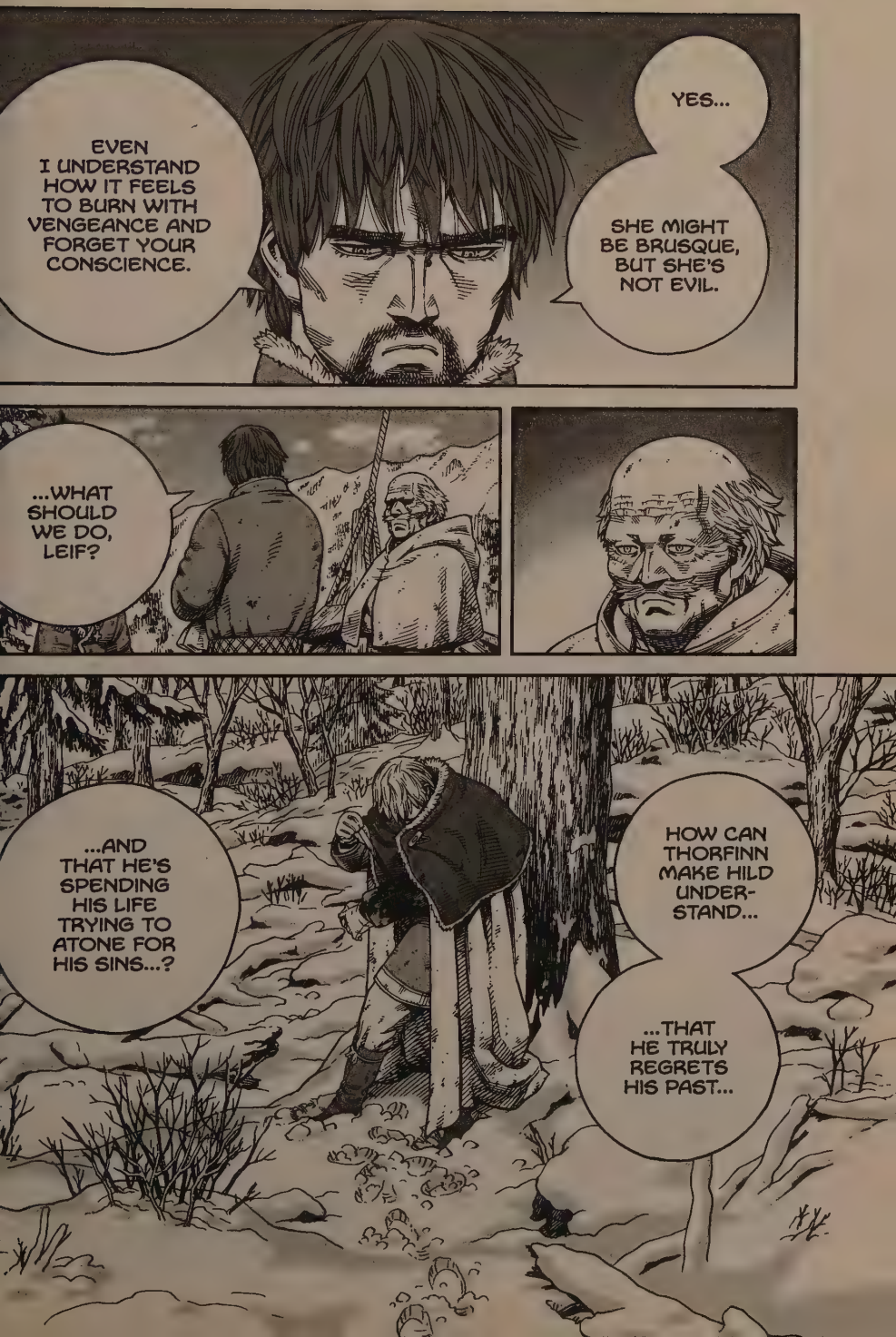


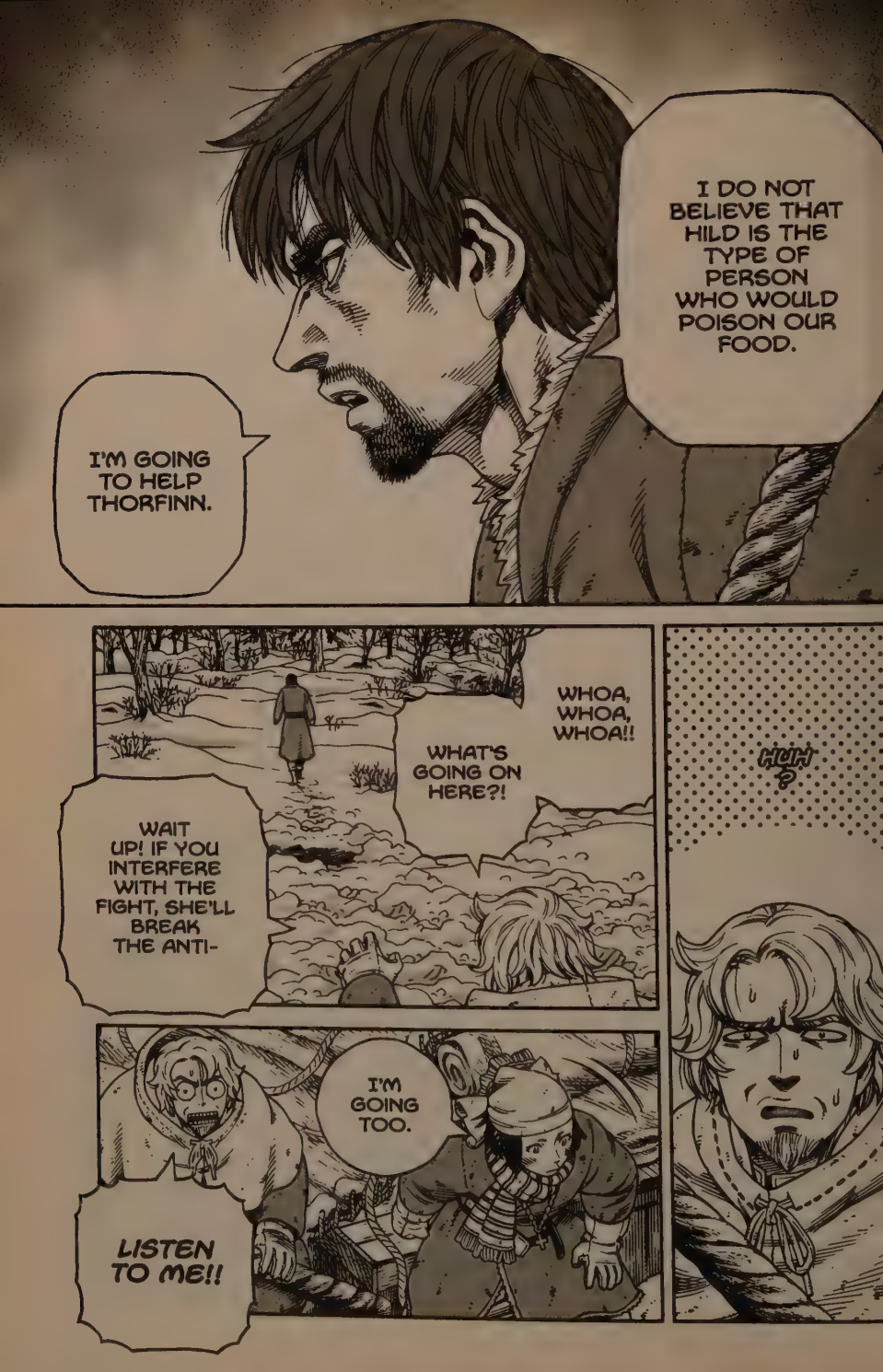
CALM DOWN, BUG-EYES.

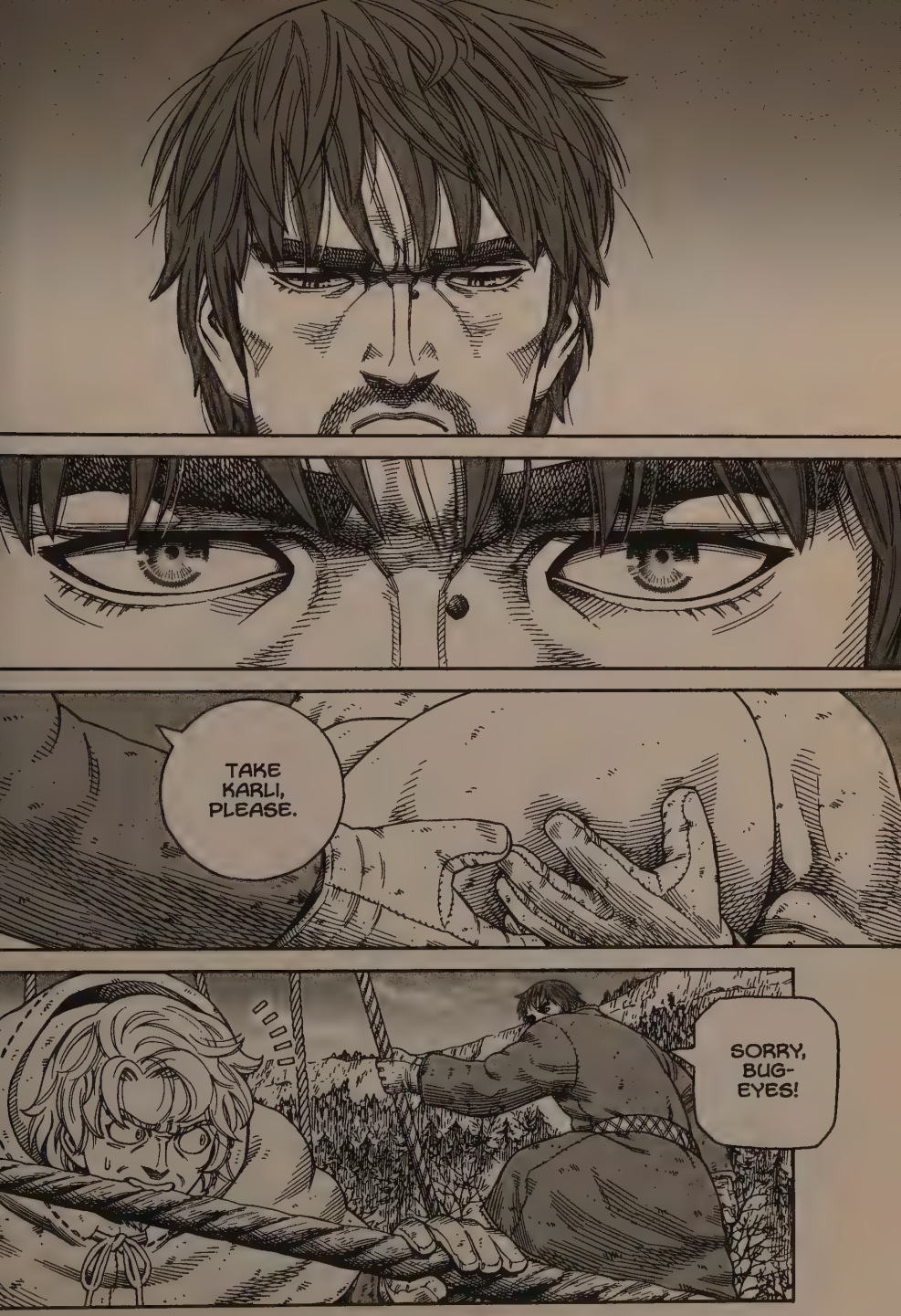
HIT ME, EINAR!

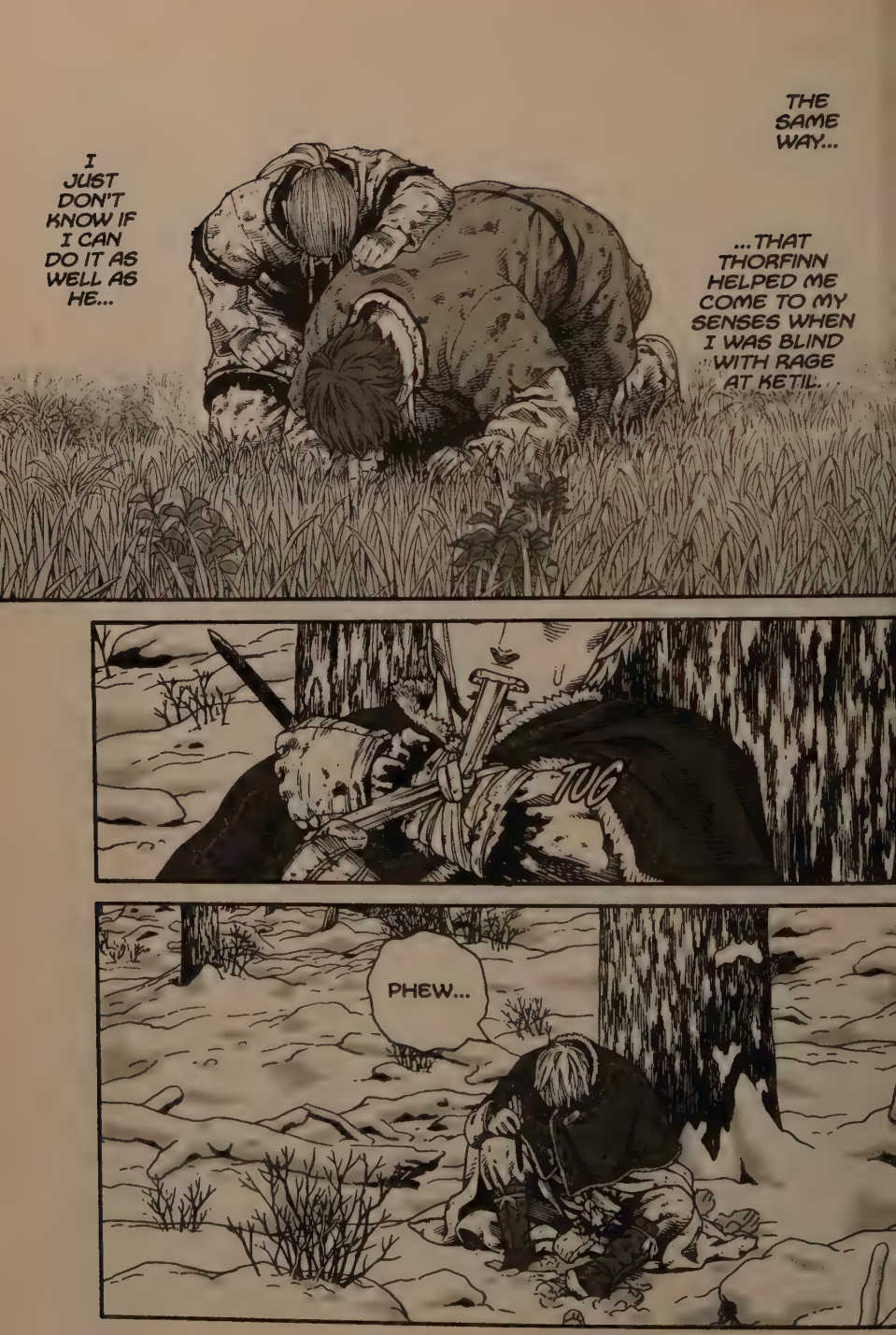
GRAB THIS THING AND WHACK ME OVER THE HEAD WITH IT!!

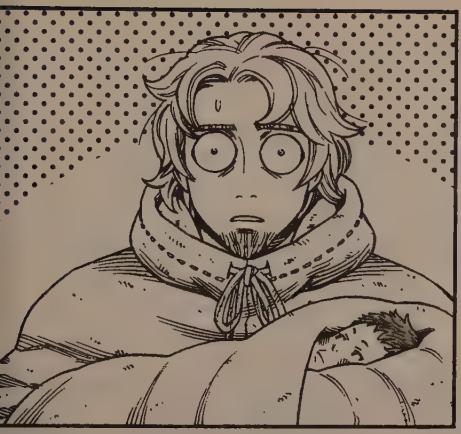
IN ORDER TO SPEAK TO THE SINCERITY THAT LIES BEYOND ANGER...
...ONE CAN ONLY BARE ONE'S OWN SINCERITY FIRST.
...

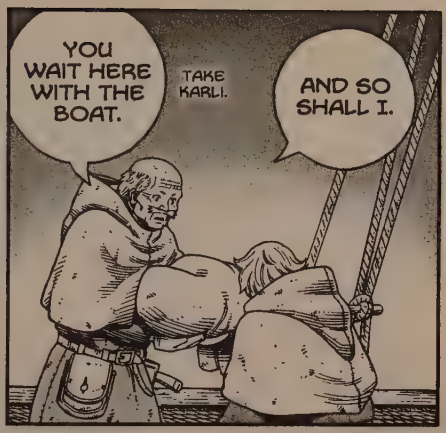

EVEN I UNDERSTAND HOW IT FEELS TO BURN WITH VENGEANCE AND FORGET YOUR CONSCIENCE.
YES...
SHE MIGHT BE BRUSQUE, BUT SHE'S NOT EVIL.
...WHAT SHOULD WE DO, LEIF?
...AND THAT HE'S SPENDING HIS LIFE TRYING TO ATONE FOR HIS SINS...?
HOW CAN THORFINN MAKE HILD UNDER-STAND...
...THAT HE TRULY REGRETS HIS PAST...

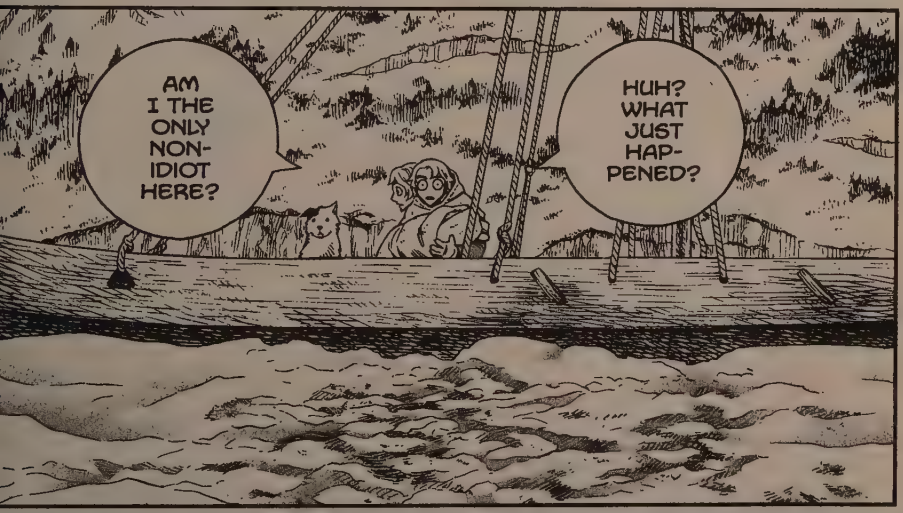

I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT HILD IS THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO WOULD POISON OUR FOOD.
I'M GOING TO HELP THORFINN.
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!
WAIT UP! IF YOU INTERFERE WITH THE FIGHT, SHE'LL BREAK THE ANTI-
HUH?
I'M GOING TOO.
LISTEN TO ME!!


TAKE KARLI, PLEASE.
SORRY, BUG-EYES!


I JUST DON'T KNOW IF I CAN DO IT AS WELL AS HE...
THE SAME WAY...
...THAT THORFINN HELPED ME COME TO MY SENSES WHEN I WAS BLIND WITH RAGE AT KETIL...
TUG
PHEW...




YOU WAIT HERE WITH THE BOAT.
TAKE KARLI.
AND SO SHALL I.

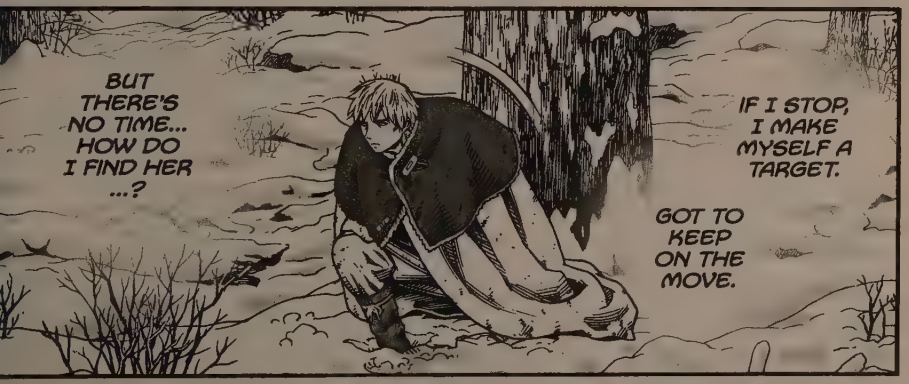

AM I THE ONLY NON-IDIOT HERE?
HUH? WHAT JUST HAP-PENED?

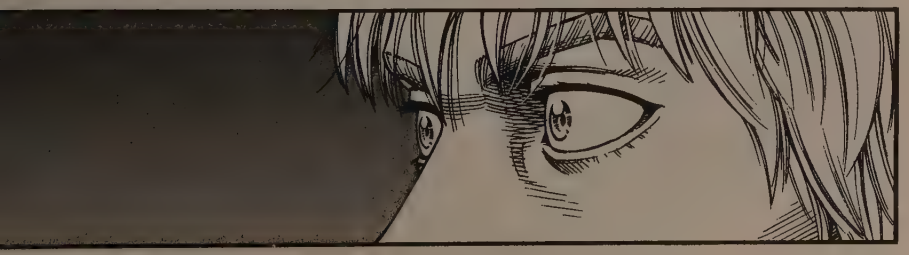
WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT IS TO PLACATE HILD.
THE OUTCOME OF THE DUEL, THE TIMING OF THE ANTIDOTE. THESE THINGS ARE SECOND-ARY.

RRRRHHHH
RRRRHHH
UAAHHHH
AAAAHH
OOOHHH

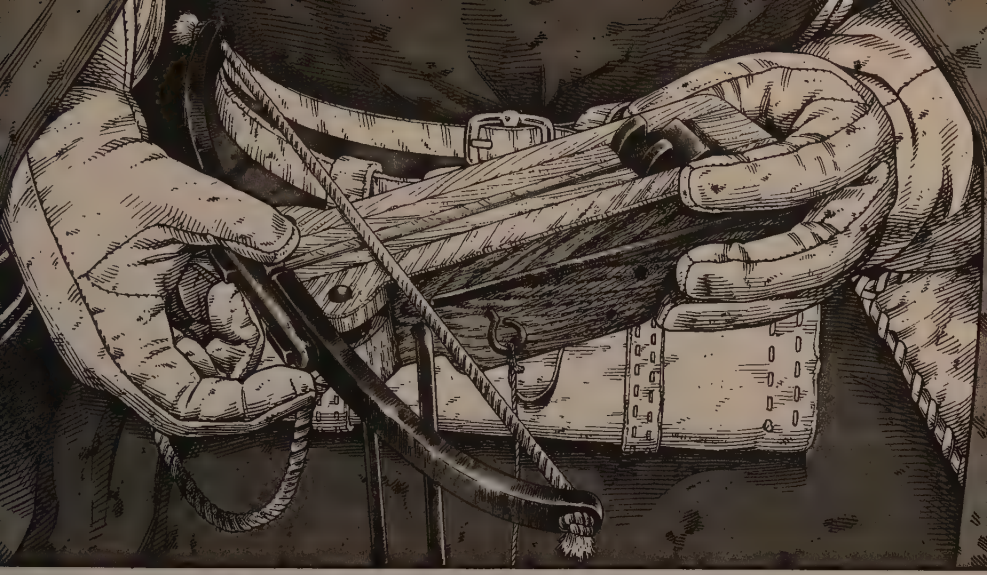
PTU

IT MIGHT JUST BE A FLAVOR-LESS POISON INSTEAD.
BUT, WAIT.
NO POISON ON THIS BOLT, IT SEEMS...

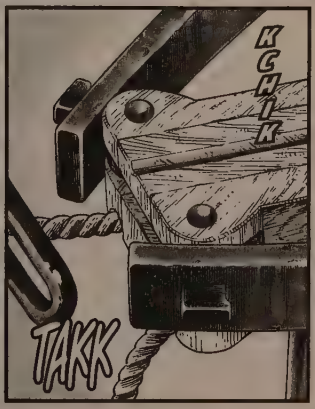

BUT THERE'S NO TIME... HOW DO I FIND HER ...?
IF I STOP, I MAKE MYSELF A TARGET.
GOT TO KEEP ON THE MOVE.



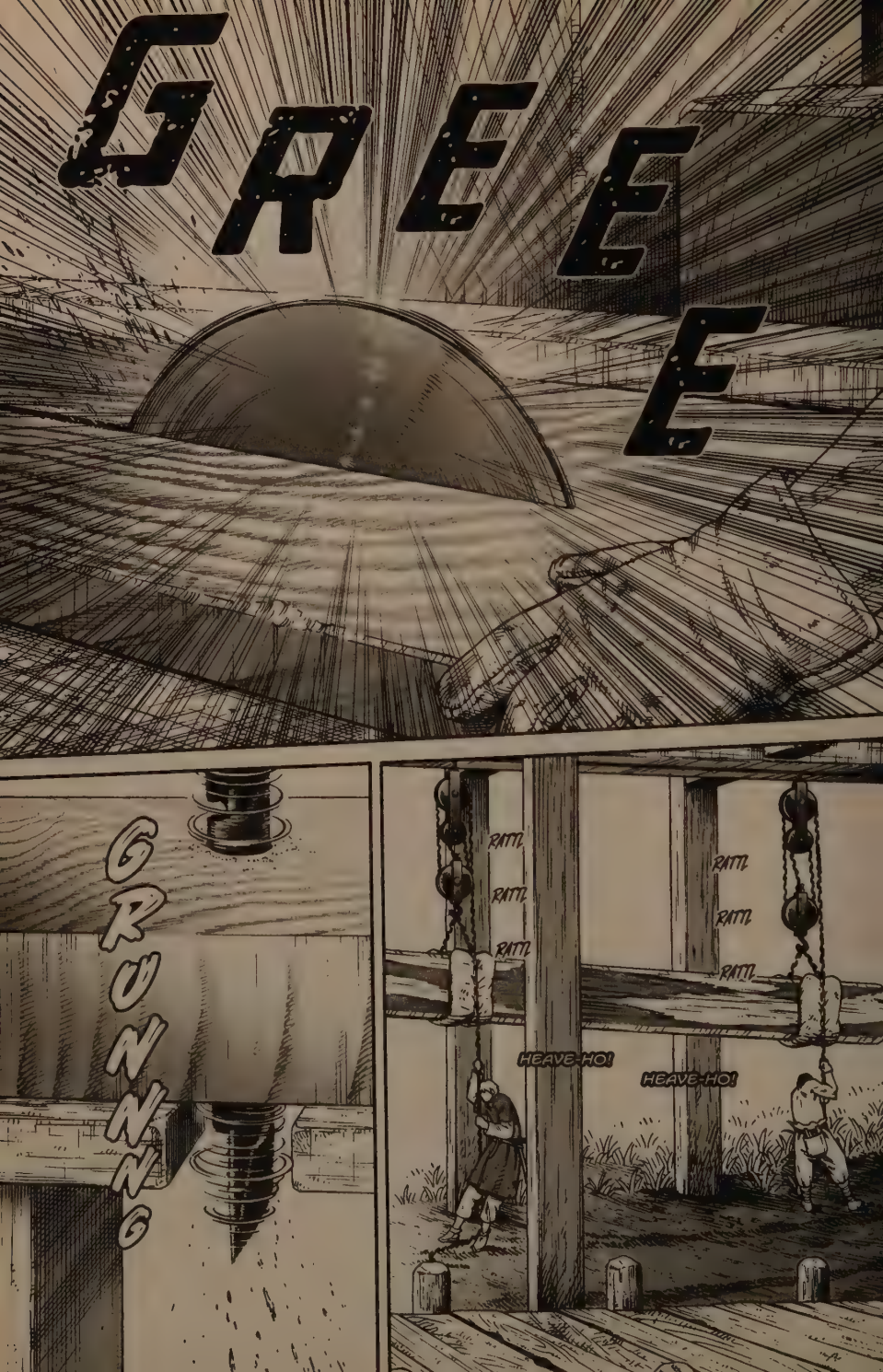
FATHER AND MOTHER AND HREFNA.
THEN BRING MY ENTIRE FAMILY BACK TO LIFE.
I WILL ACCEPT NO OTHER ATONE-MENT.
BRING IT BACK TO ME...
BRING IT ALL BACK... LIKE IT WAS...



SHUFF


KCHIK
TAKK

LIVE TO ATONE...?
NON-SENSE.

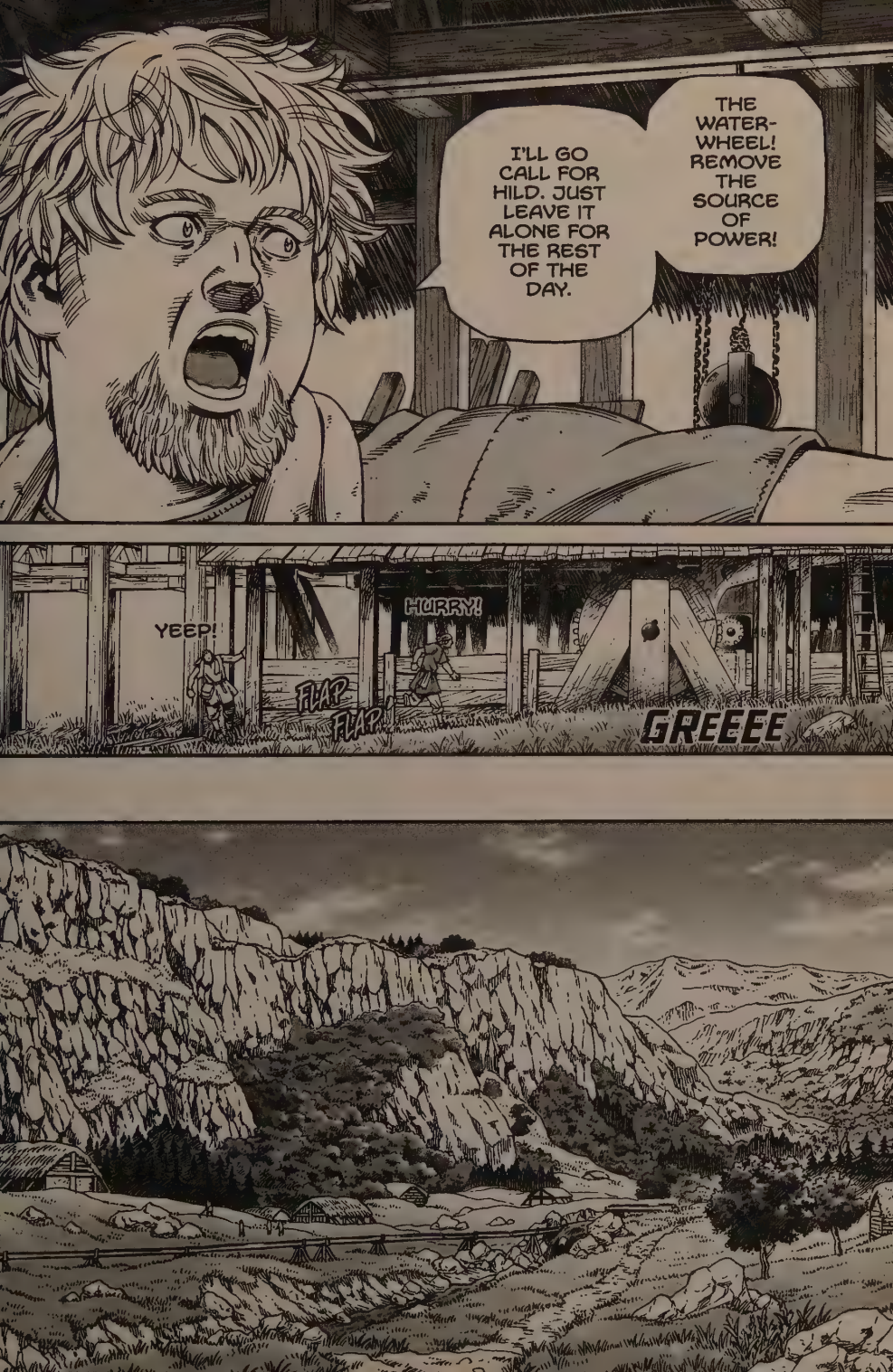

GREEE
GRUNNNG
RATTL
RATTL
RATTL
RATTL
RATTL
RATTL
HEAVE-HO!
HEAVE-HO!

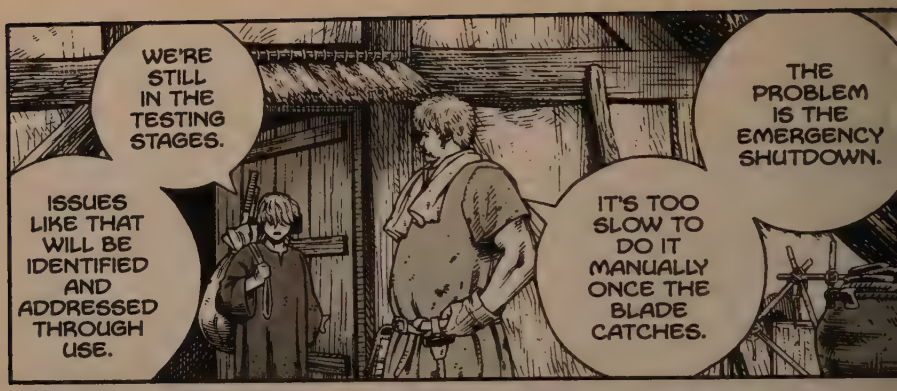
AND IF YOU CAN'T...
...THEN YOU WILL ATONE WITH YOUR DEATH, THORFINN.

GRE
E
E
GANK
SHUT IT DOWN, SHUT IT DOWN!
THE BLADE CAUGHT !!
UH-OH!
ZHAAAAA
GONG
GONG
GONG
I SMELL SOME-THING BURNING! IS THAT BAD?!
WAIT, HOW DO YOU STOP IT AGAIN?!
GRIT GRIT GRIT-GRIT
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL
YOU PULL A ROD OR SOME-THING, DON'T YOU?

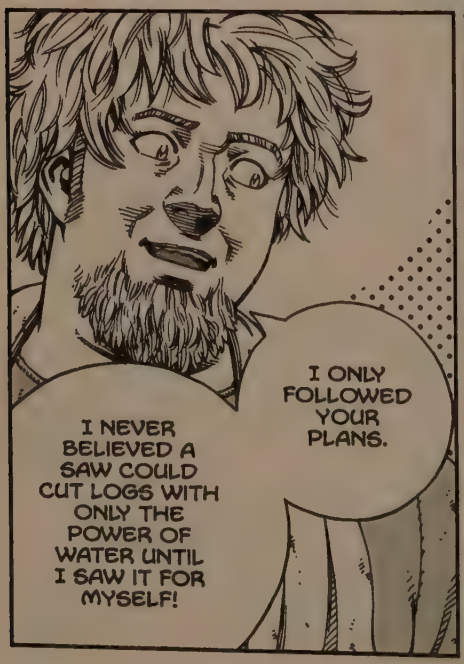
CHAPTER 118: THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (5)

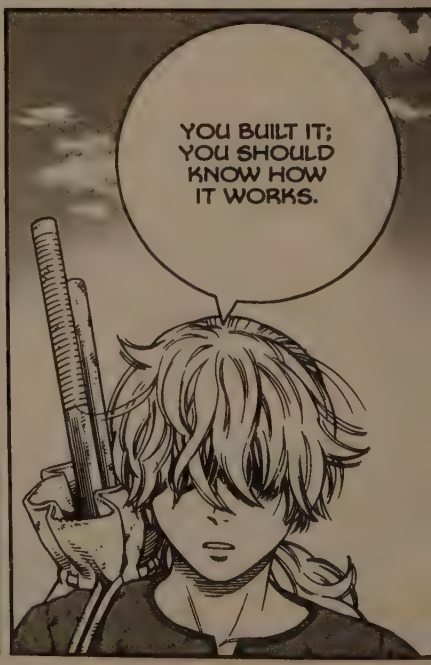
GOOD AFTER-NOON.
HELLO, MR. HRAFNKELL!
HILD, ARE YOU IN HERE?
HILD!

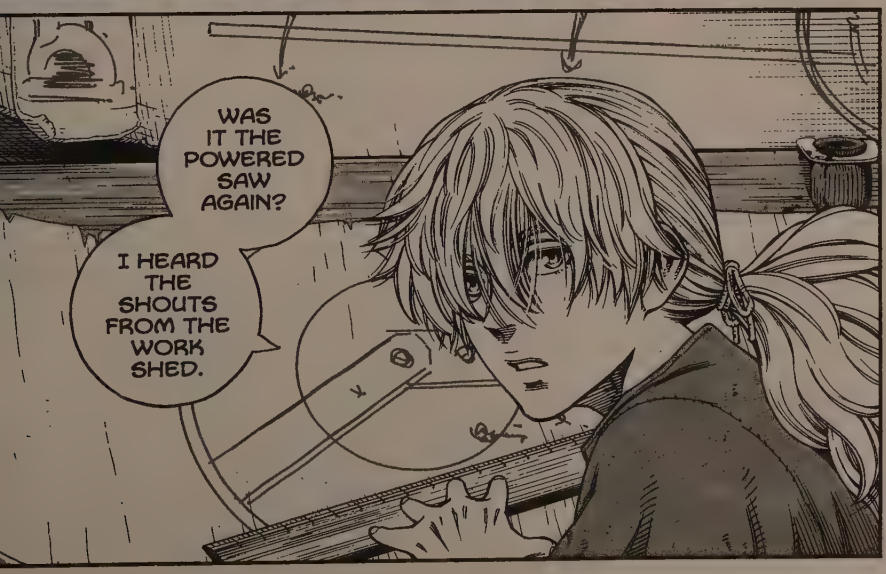

I'LL GO CALL FOR HILD. JUST LEAVE IT ALONE FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.
THE WATER-WHEEL! REMOVE THE SOURCE OF POWER!
YEEP!
HURRY!
FLAP
FLAP!
GREEEE

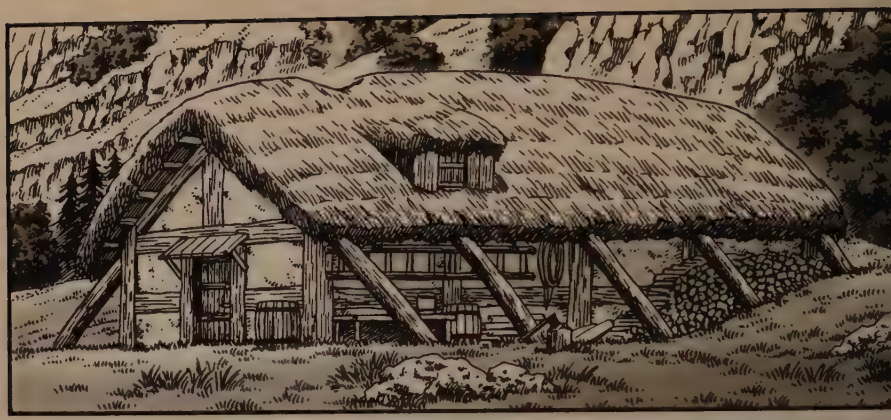

WE'RE STILL IN THE TESTING STAGES.
ISSUES LIKE THAT WILL BE IDENTIFIED AND ADDRESSED THROUGH USE.
THE PROBLEM IS THE EMERGENCY SHUTDOWN.
IT'S TOO SLOW TO DO IT MANUALLY ONCE THE BLADE CATCHES.

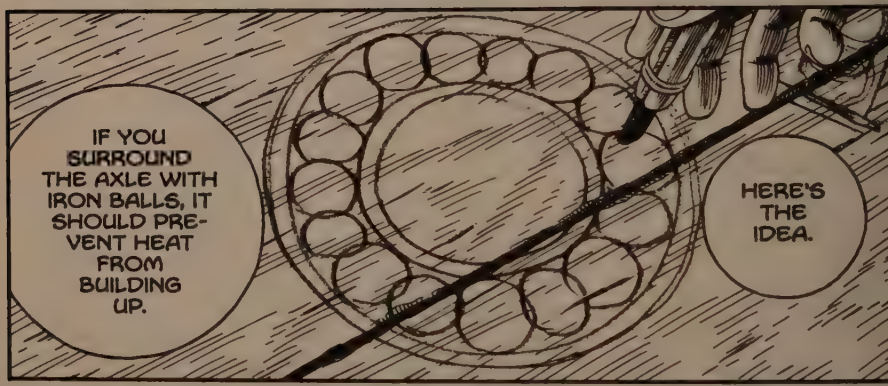
I CAME HERE TO HAVE YOU TAKE A LOOK AT IT.
GIVE IT AN INSPECTION.
SO WHAT PART BROKE?

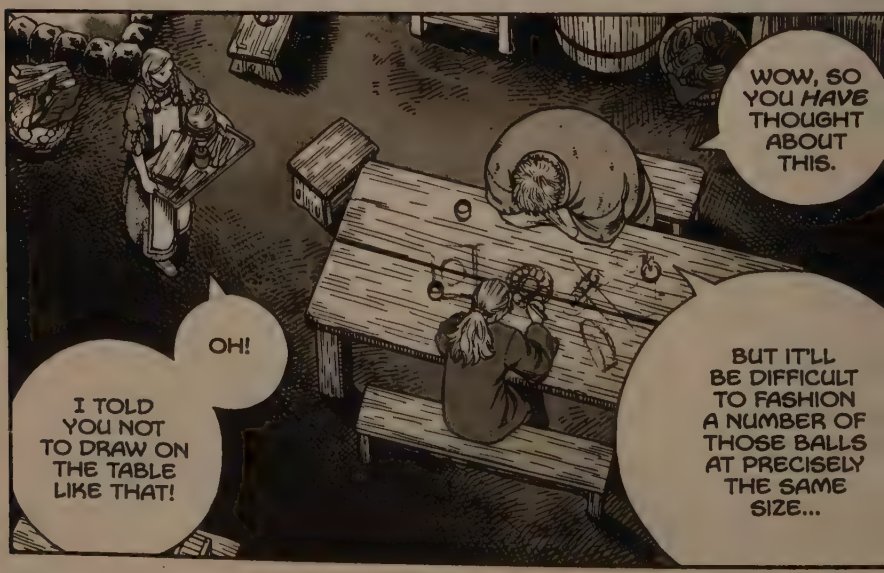

I ONLY FOLLOWED YOUR PLANS.
I NEVER BELIEVED A SAW COULD CUT LOGS WITH ONLY THE POWER OF WATER UNTIL I SAW IT FOR MYSELF!

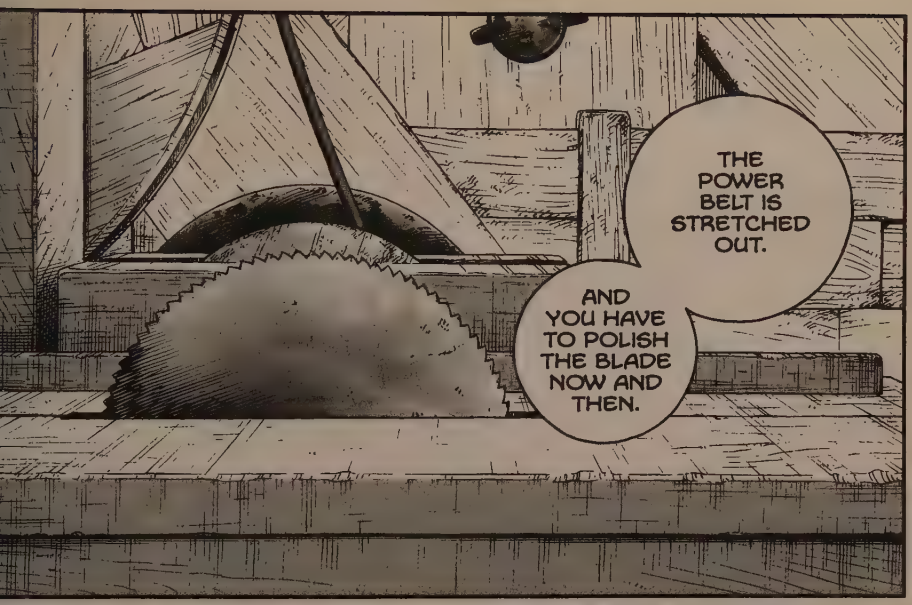

YOU BUILT IT; YOU SHOULD KNOW HOW IT WORKS.


WAS IT THE POWERED SAW AGAIN?
I HEARD THE SHOUTS FROM THE WORK SHED.

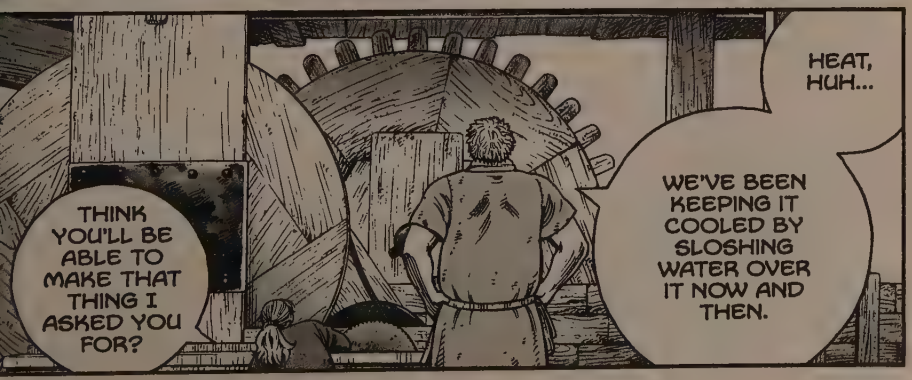



IF YOU SURROUND THE AXLE WITH IRON BALLS, IT SHOULD PREVENT HEAT FROM BUILDING UP.
HERE'S THE IDEA.

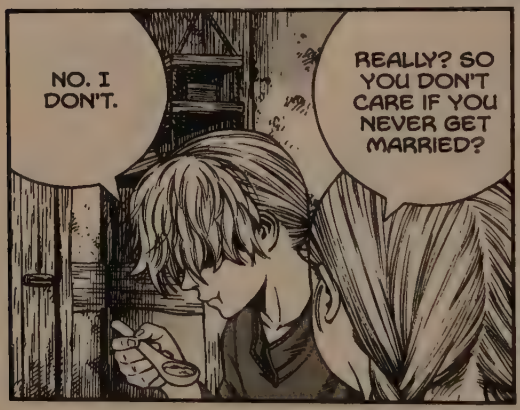

WOW, SO YOU *HAVE* THOUGHT ABOUT THIS.
OH!
I TOLD YOU NOT TO DRAW ON THE TABLE LIKE THAT!
BUT IT'LL BE DIFFICULT TO FASHION A NUMBER OF THOSE BALLS AT PRECISELY THE SAME SIZE...

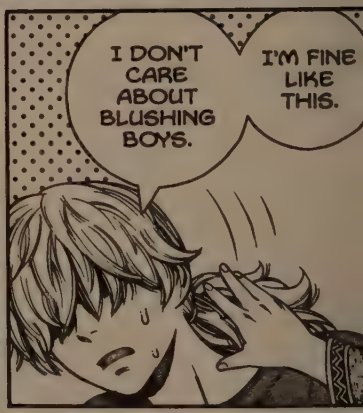

THE POWER BELT IS STRETCHED OUT.
AND YOU HAVE TO POLISH THE BLADE NOW AND THEN.

IT CATCHES A LOT. IS THERE ANY WAY TO INCREASE THE SPEED?
IF THE BIG PULLEY WERE EVEN BIGGER...
BUT THEN THAT'D ADD EVEN MORE HEAT TO THE BEARINGS.


HEAT, HUH...
WE'VE BEEN KEEPING IT COOLED BY SLOSHING WATER OVER IT NOW AND THEN.
THINK YOU'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE THAT THING I ASKED YOU FOR?

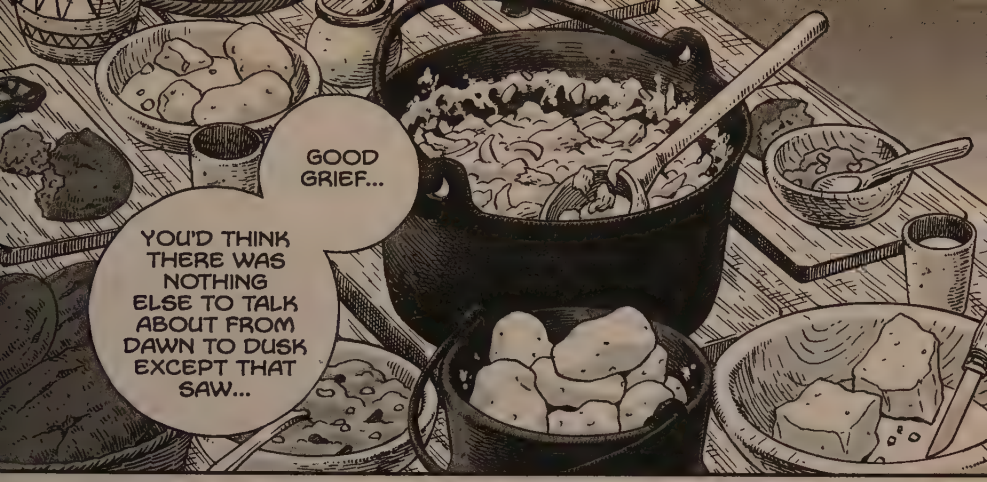
LET'S GIVE YOU A MAKE-OVER AND DO YOUR HAIR AND CLOTHES!
I WANNA CUT YOUR BANGS.
YOU HAVE A PRETTY FACE, SO I KNOW YOU'D MAKE ALL THE BOYS BLUSH IF YOU JUST PRESENTED YOURSELF BETTER!
TINKER ...?

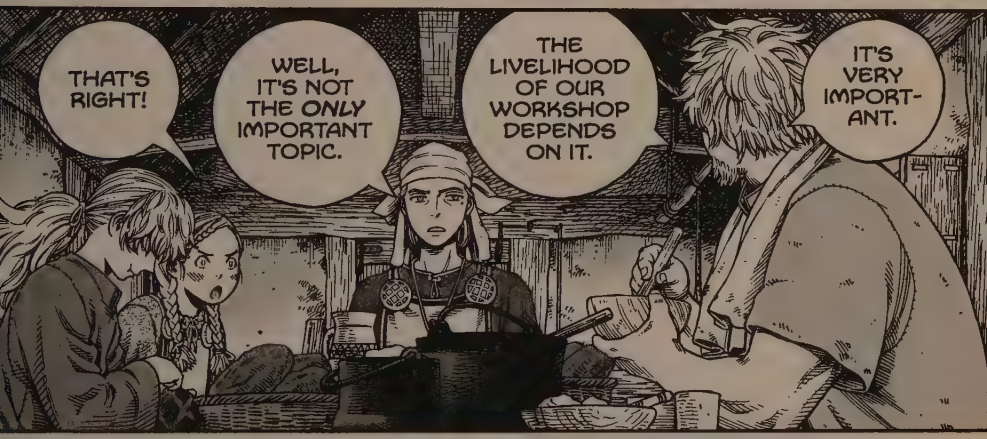

NO. I DON'T.
REALLY? SO YOU DON'T CARE IF YOU NEVER GET MARRIED?

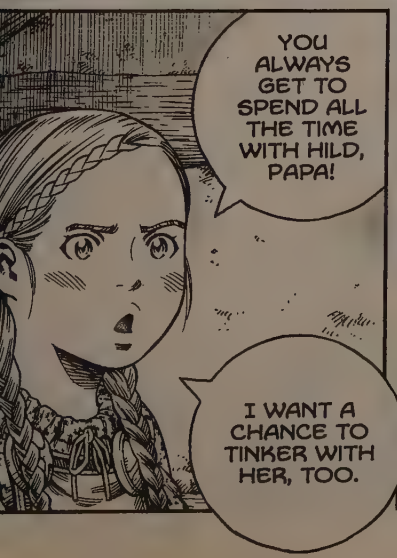

I DON'T CARE ABOUT BLUSHING BOYS.
I'M FINE LIKE THIS.

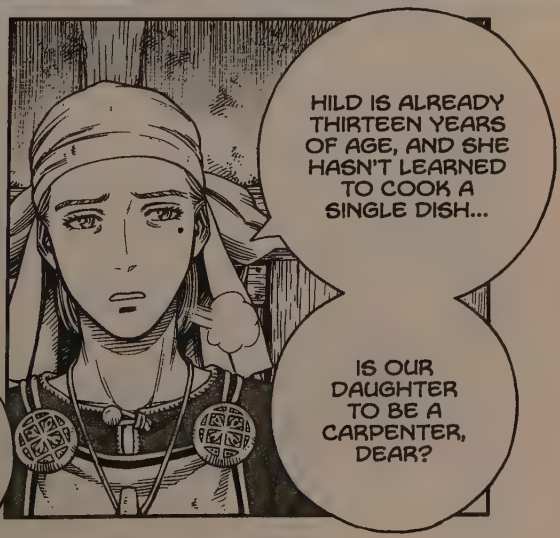
IF SHE DOESN'T WANT TO MARRY INTO ANOTHER FAMILY, THAT'S FINE.
WE CAN BRING IN ONE OF THE YOUNGSTERS FROM THE SHOP AS A SON.

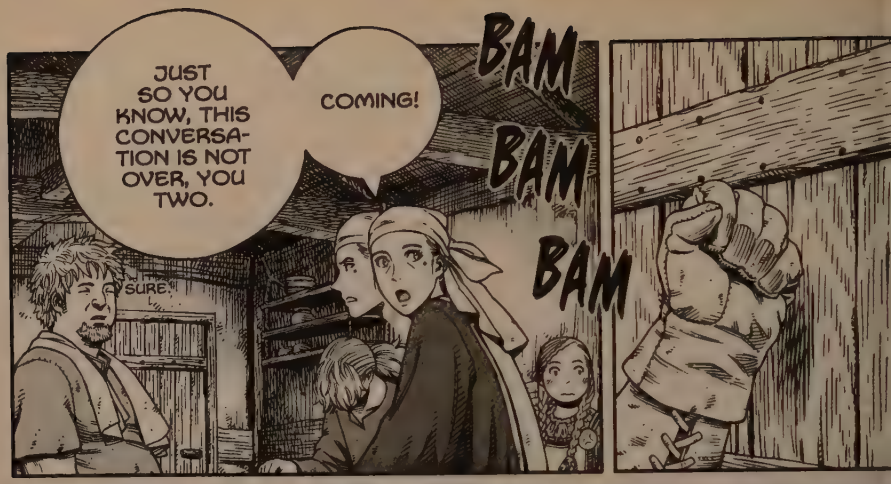
WHAT.

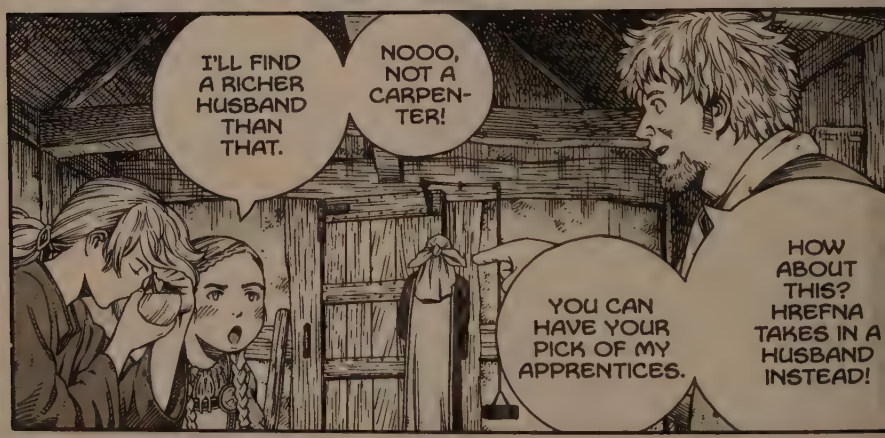

GOOD GRIEF...
YOU'D THINK THERE WAS NOTHING ELSE TO TALK ABOUT FROM DAWN TO DUSK EXCEPT THAT SAW...


THAT'S RIGHT!
WELL, IT'S NOT THE *ONLY* IMPORTANT TOPIC.
THE LIVELIHOOD OF OUR WORKSHOP DEPENDS ON IT.
IT'S VERY IMPORT-ANT.


YOU ALWAYS GET TO SPEND ALL THE TIME WITH HILD, PAPA!
I WANT A CHANCE TO TINKER WITH HER, TOO.

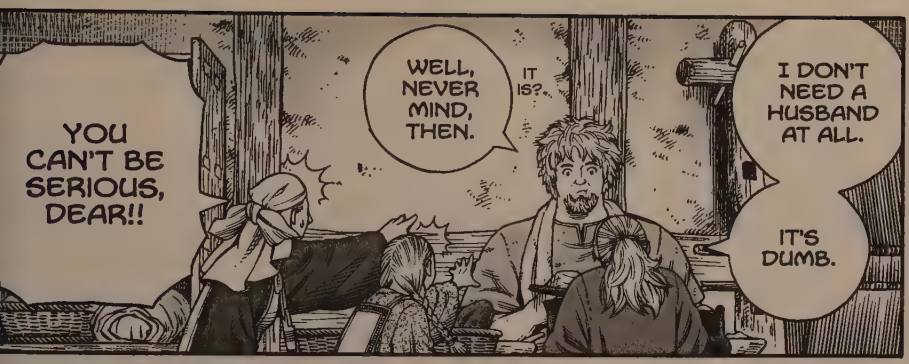

HILD IS ALREADY THIRTEEN YEARS OF AGE, AND SHE HASN'T LEARNED TO COOK A SINGLE DISH...
IS OUR DAUGHTER TO BE A CARPENTER, DEAR?

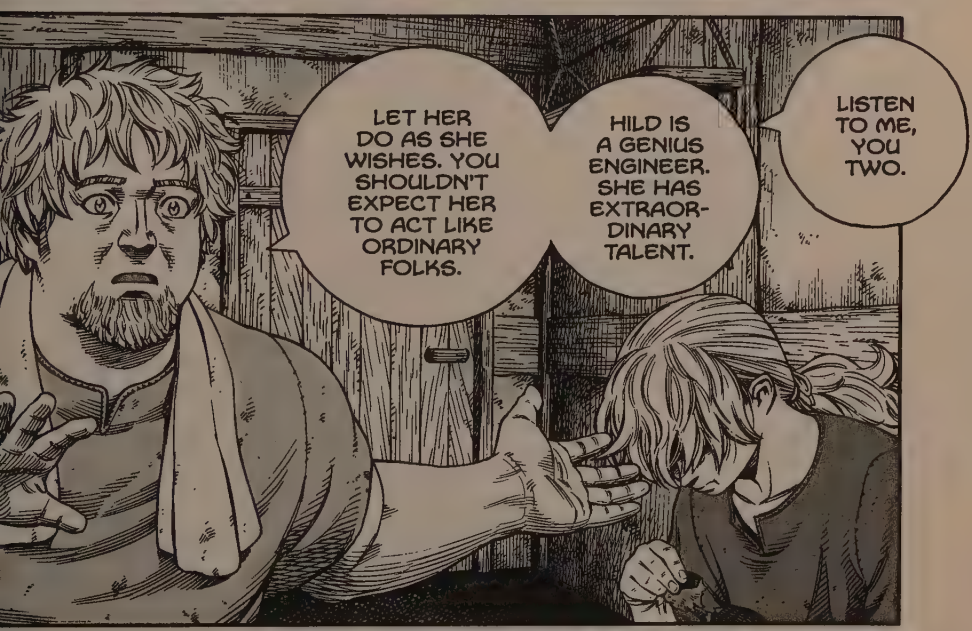

JUST SO YOU KNOW, THIS CONVERSATION IS NOT OVER, YOU TWO.
COMING!
BAM BAM BAM
SURE.

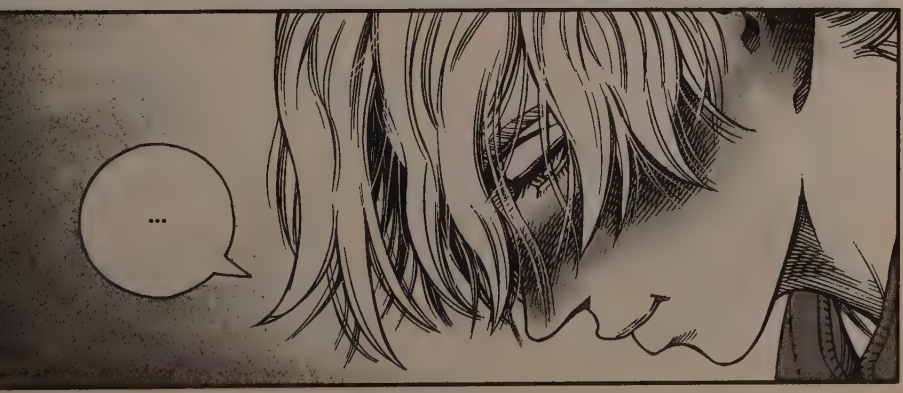

I'LL FIND A RICHER HUSBAND THAN THAT.
NOOO, NOT A CARPENTER!
YOU CAN HAVE YOUR PICK OF MY APPRENTICES.
HOW ABOUT THIS? HREFNA TAKES IN A HUSBAND INSTEAD!

DEAR!!
WHAM

GOOD EVENING, MA'AM.


YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS, DEAR!!
WELL, NEVER MIND, THEN.
IT IS?..
I DON'T NEED A HUSBAND AT ALL.
IT'S DUMB.


LET HER DO AS SHE WISHES. YOU SHOULDN'T EXPECT HER TO ACT LIKE ORDINARY FOLKS.
HILD IS A GENIUS ENGINEER. SHE HAS EXTRAORDINARY TALENT.
LISTEN TO ME, YOU TWO.


...

PARDON THE INTRU-SION.

HATE TO INTERRUPT YOUR DINNER.

OOH, HE'S GOT DAUGHTERS!

YEP, THAT'S HIM.

WHY DOES THE DOOR CLOSE ON ITS OWN?

SO IS THAT HRAFN-KELL?

MOTHER?

...

DCHUNK
CRAK

RA
AH
H
H

GSHK
HILD, HREFNA.
GO OUT BACK AND RUN TO THE BIG CEDAR IN THE WOODS.
ZMMF
BUT PAPA, MAMA'S...
GO!! RUN!!

FWOOOOM

CRAK CRAK

CRAKLE

COME ON! I KNOW YOU'RE BETTER THAN THAT!!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HRAFNKELL GOT AWAY?!

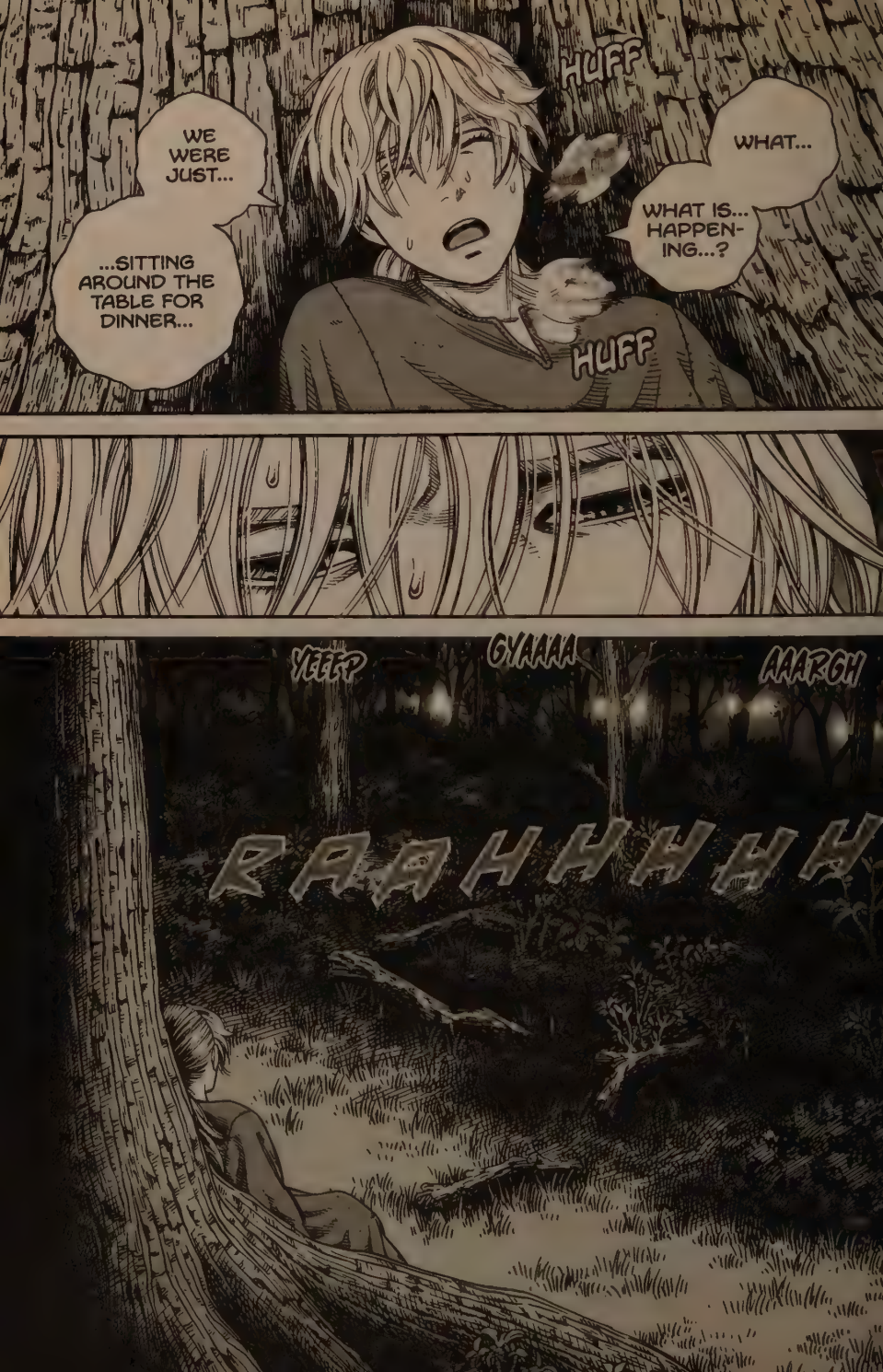
WE'RE NOT GOING TO GET PAID IF WE DON'T KILL HRAFN-KELL!

OH, THIS IS JUST GREAT.

SORRY, ASKELADD. HE WAS TOUGHER THAN WE GAVE HIM CREDIT FOR.

HE KILLED TWO OF US.

RAAAAHHH
EYAAA
HURGH


WE WERE JUST...
...SITTING AROUND THE TABLE FOR DINNER...
HUFF
HUFF
WHAT...
WHAT IS... HAPPEN-ING...?
YEEP
GYAAAA
AAARGH
RAAHHHHH

FSH

ZDDD...
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

RAHHH

QUIET.

THEY'LL HEAR YOU.

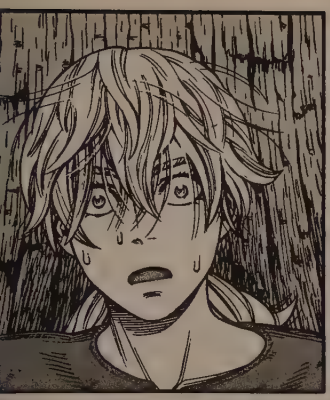
HREFNA... I GOT SEPARATED FROM HREFNA!

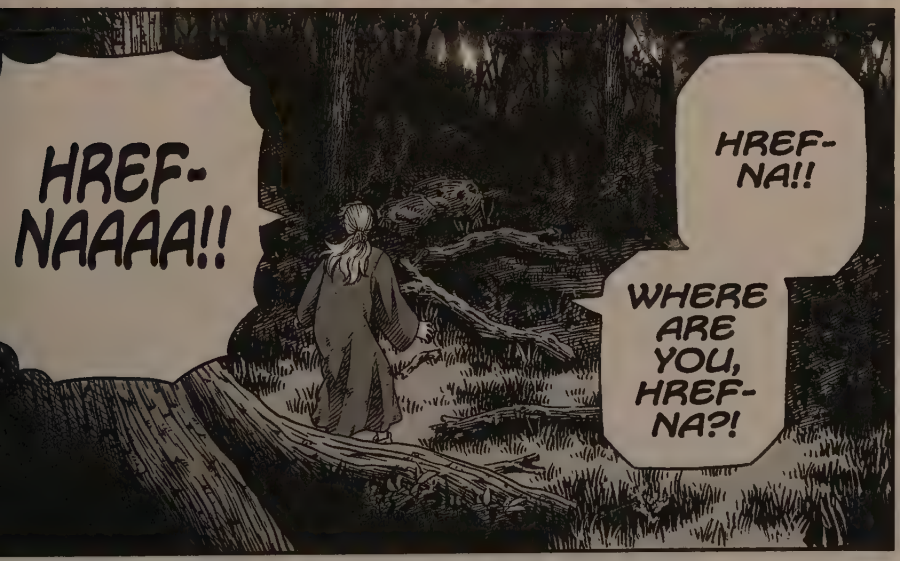
WE HAVE TO LOOK FOR HER, FATHER!

FATHER! YOU'RE BLEEDING!

THIS? IT'S NOTHING.

ARE YOU ALONE?




HREF-NAAAA!!
HREF-NA!!
WHERE ARE YOU, HREF-NA?!

HREF-
MMF?!

FORGIVE YOUR FELLOW MAN...

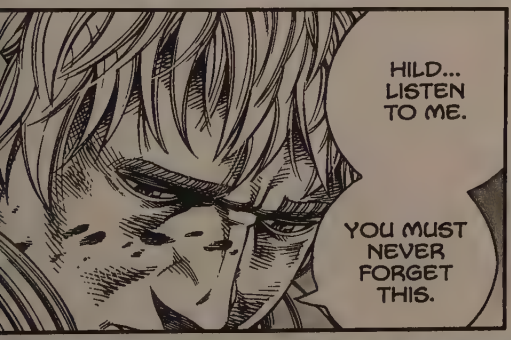
...FOR FORGIVE-NESS IS YOUR ONLY SALVATION.

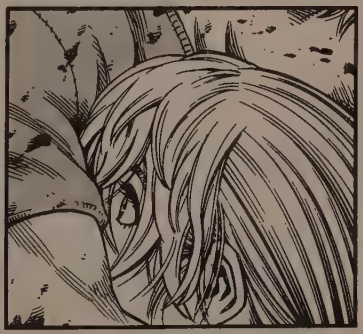
I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT.

IT IS VERY HARD TO DO...BUT YOU ARE SO SMART.

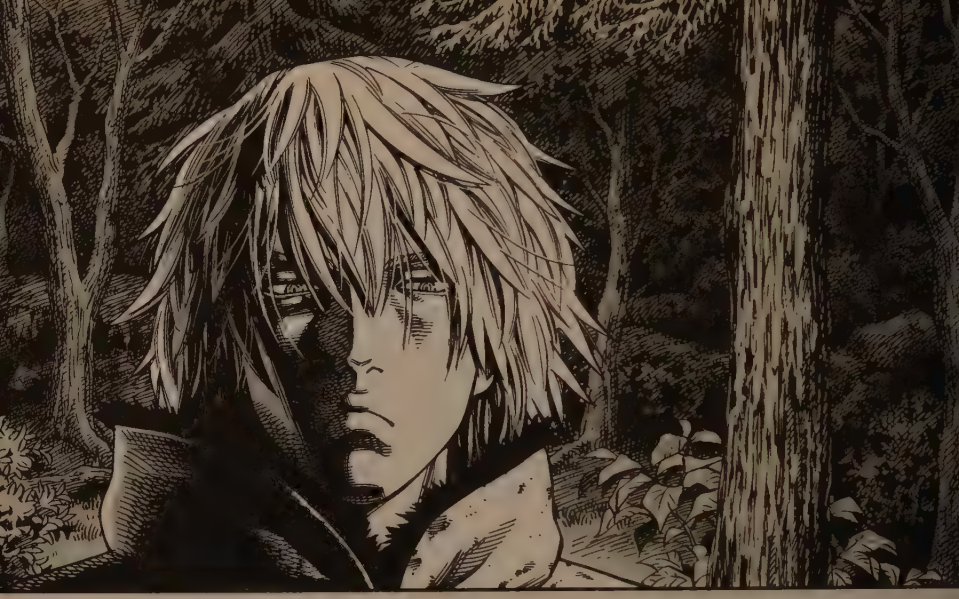
MUST SMARTER THAN I AM.

ZSHH

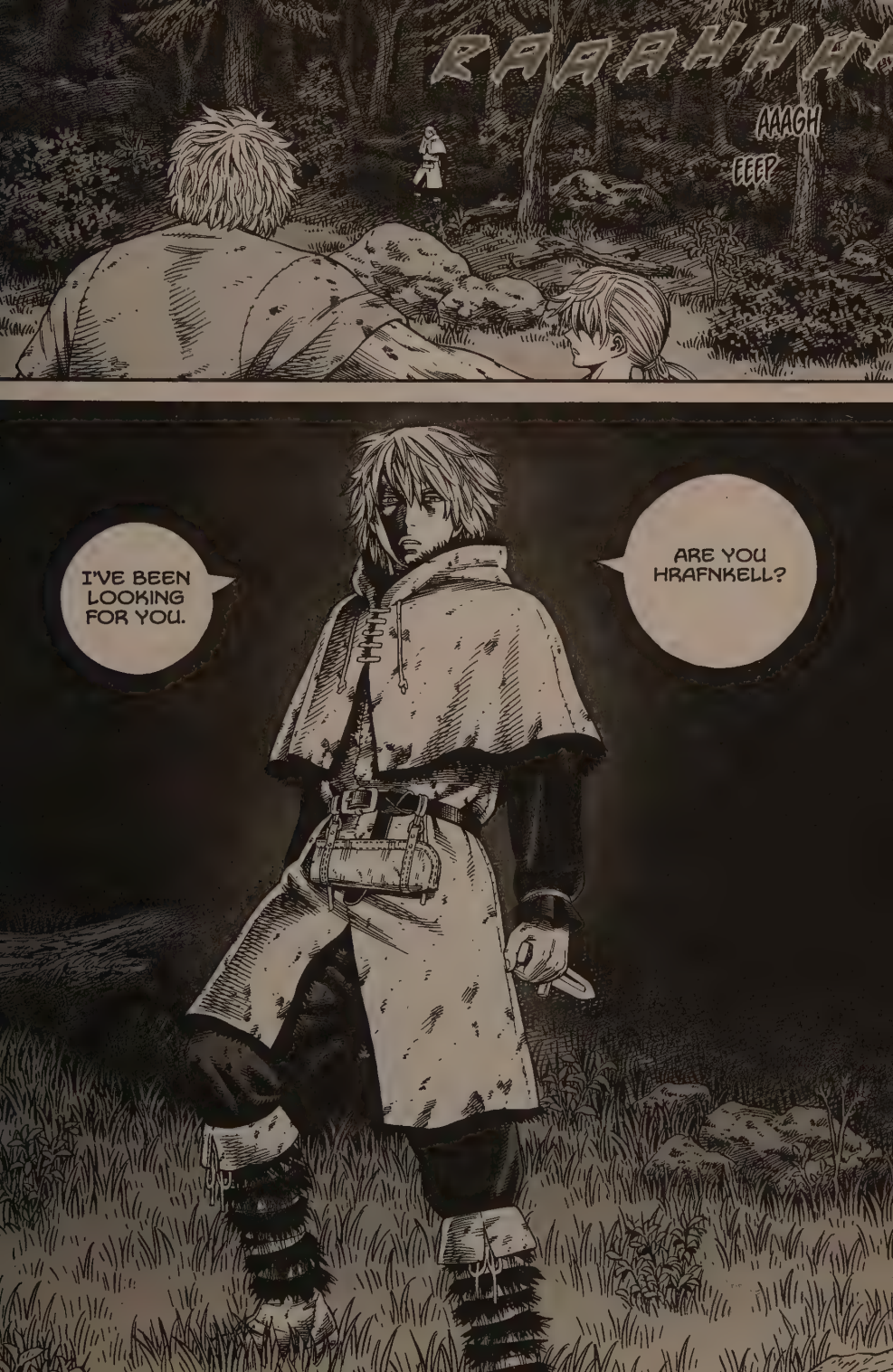

HILD... LISTEN TO ME.
YOU MUST NEVER FORGET THIS.

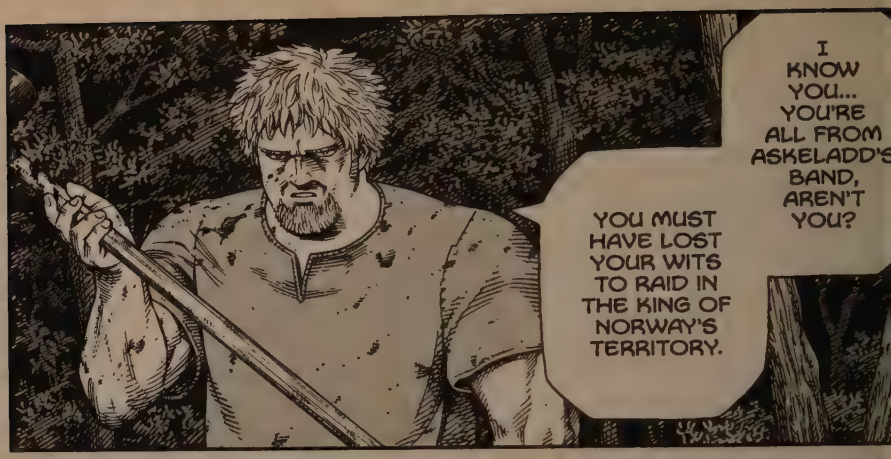


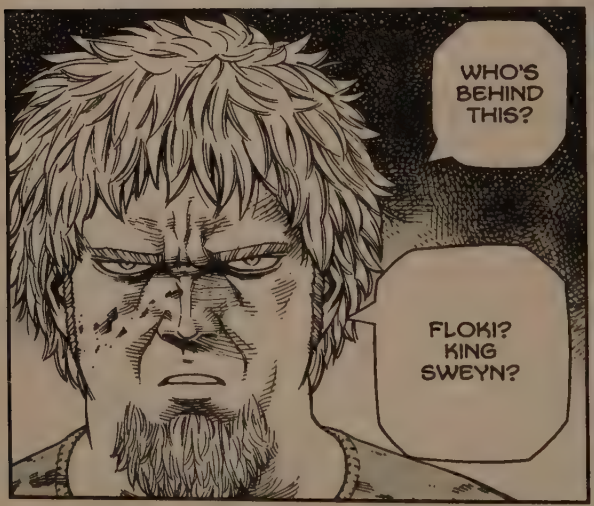
...REMEMBER THE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST.
LATER ON, WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE THE HATRED AND ANGER THREATEN TO CRUSH YOUR SOUL...



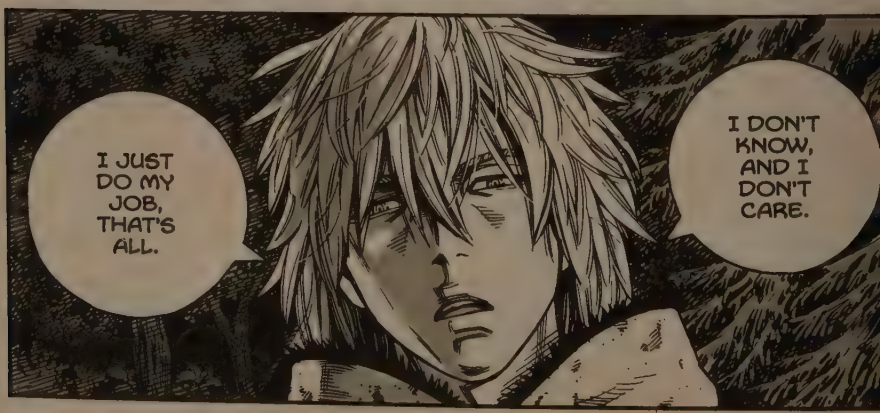
CHAPTER 119: THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (6)


RAAAHHHA
AAAGH
EEEP
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU.
ARE YOU HRAFNKELL?


YOU MUST HAVE LOST YOUR WITS TO RAID IN THE KING OF NORWAY'S TERRITORY.
I KNOW YOU... YOU'RE ALL FROM ASKELADD'S BAND, AREN'T YOU?

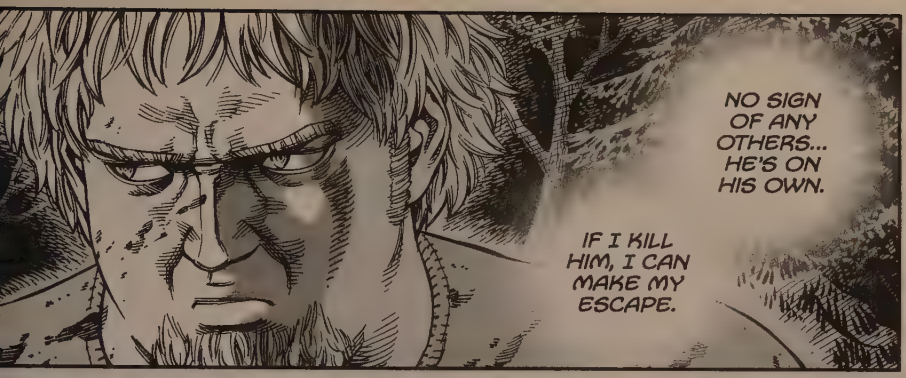

WHO'S BEHIND THIS?
FLOKI? KING SWEYN?

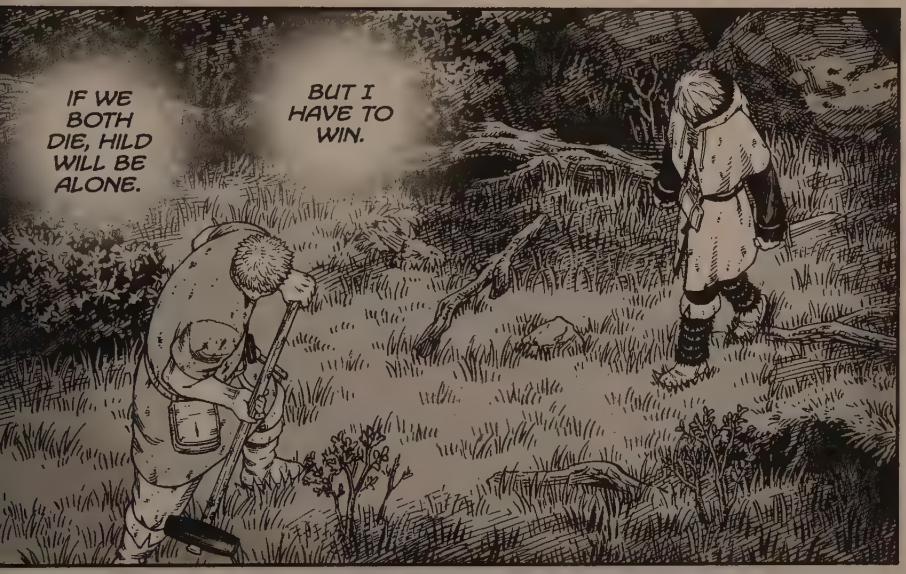
...?


I JUST DO MY JOB, THAT'S ALL.
I DON'T KNOW, AND I DON'T CARE.

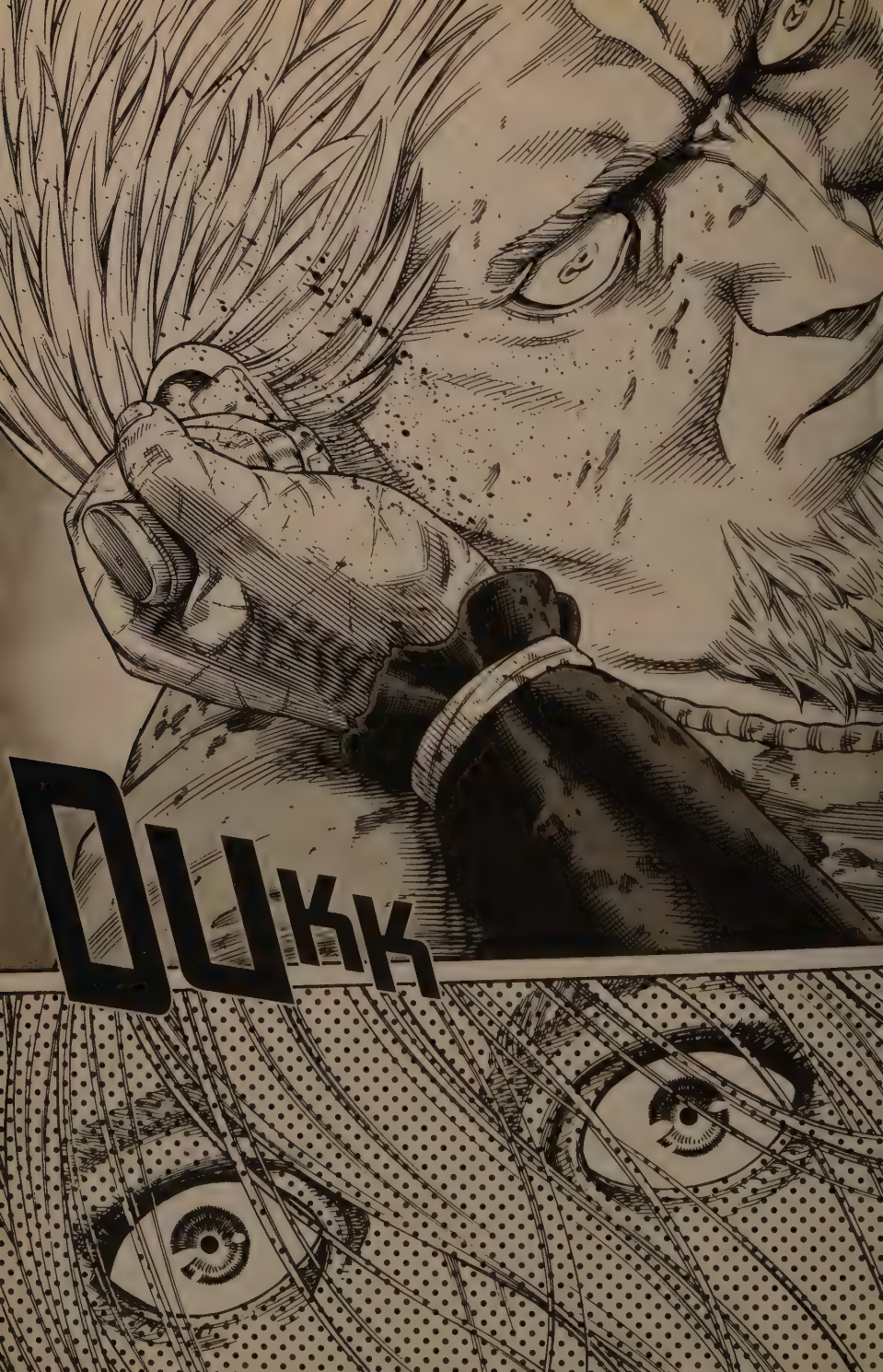
ZSH
ZASH
ZSH
ZSH

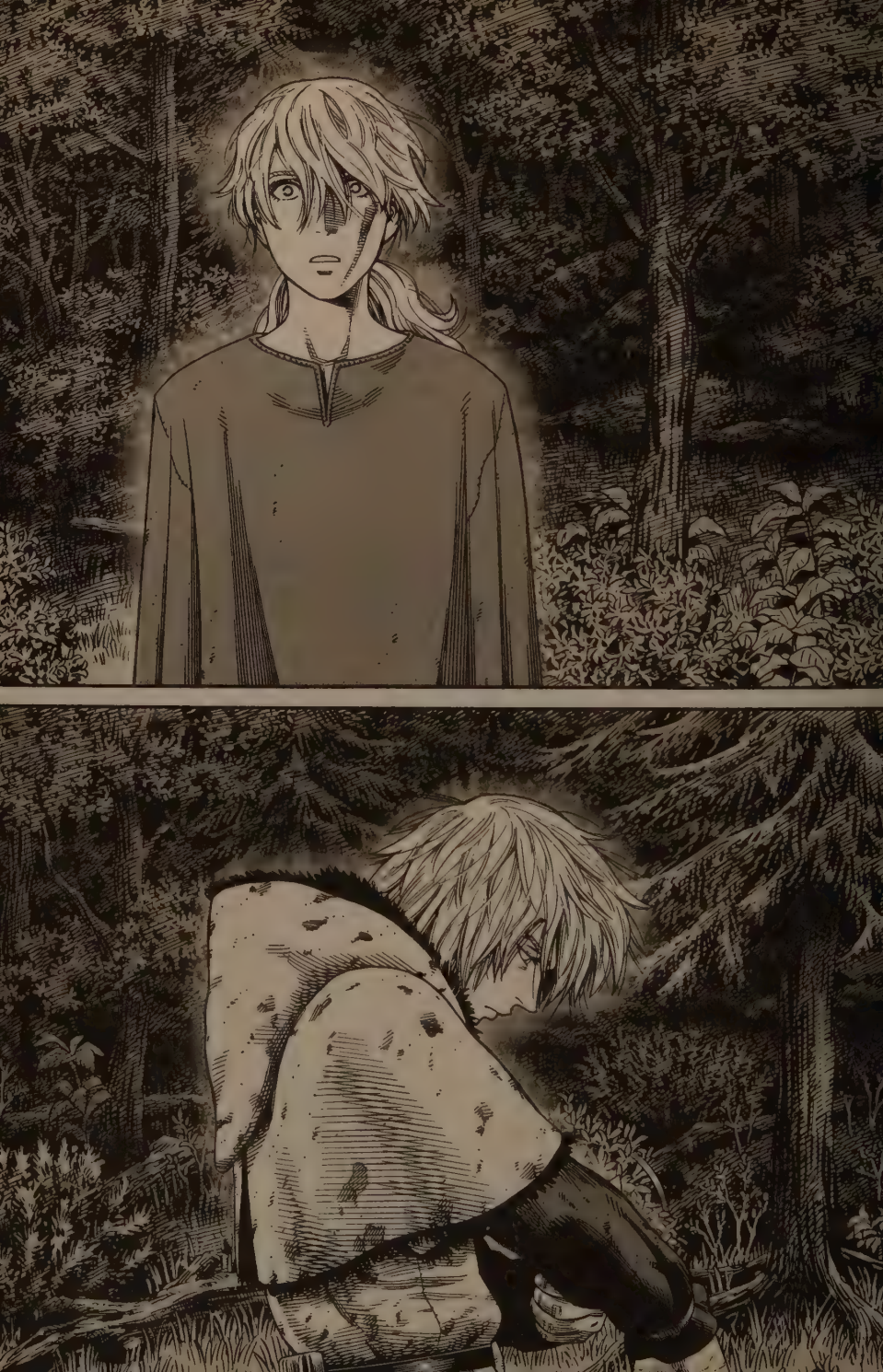
HRNG !!


NO SIGN OF ANY OTHERS... HE'S ON HIS OWN.
IF I KILL HIM, I CAN MAKE MY ESCAPE.

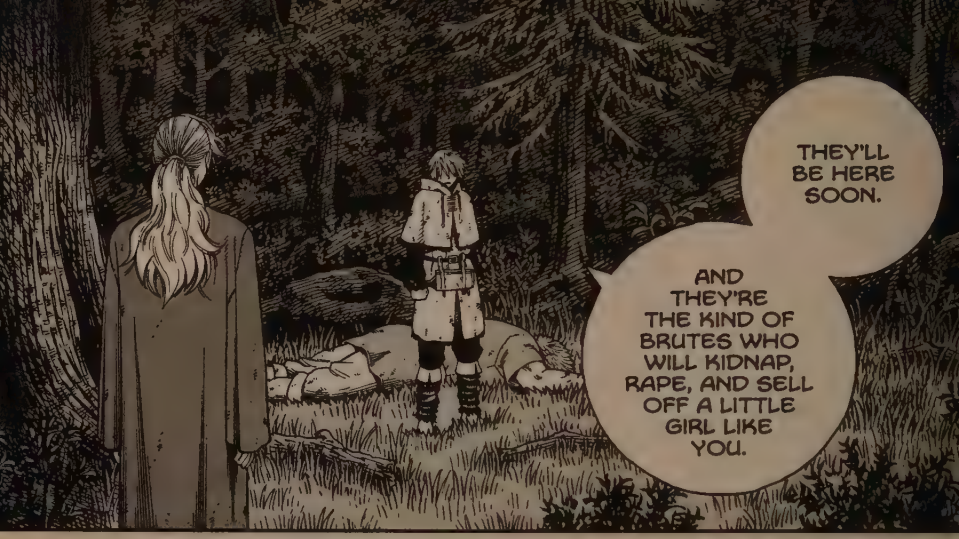

IF WE BOTH DIE, HILD WILL BE ALONE.
BUT I HAVE TO WIN.

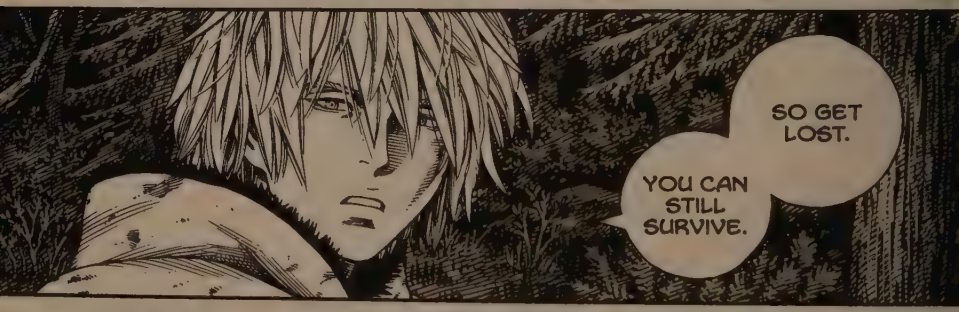
ZMM

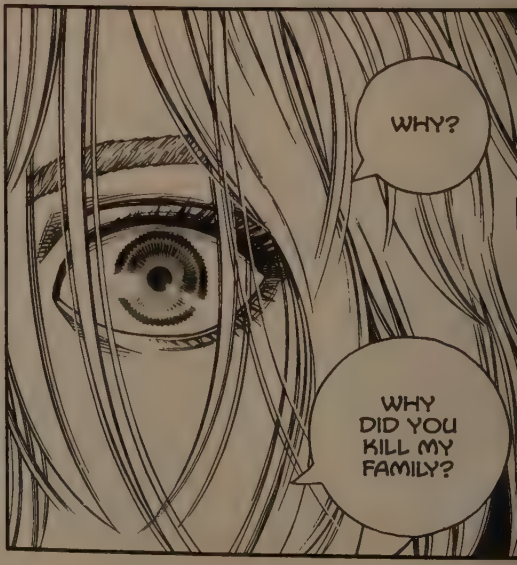

DUKK

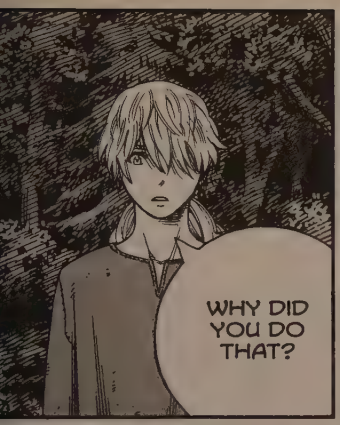


ZLAK
CAN'T LET...
...HER BE...
THUMP


THEY'LL BE HERE SOON.
AND THEY'RE THE KIND OF BRUTES WHO WILL KIDNAP, RAPE, AND SELL OFF A LITTLE GIRL LIKE YOU.


SO GET LOST.
YOU CAN STILL SURVIVE.

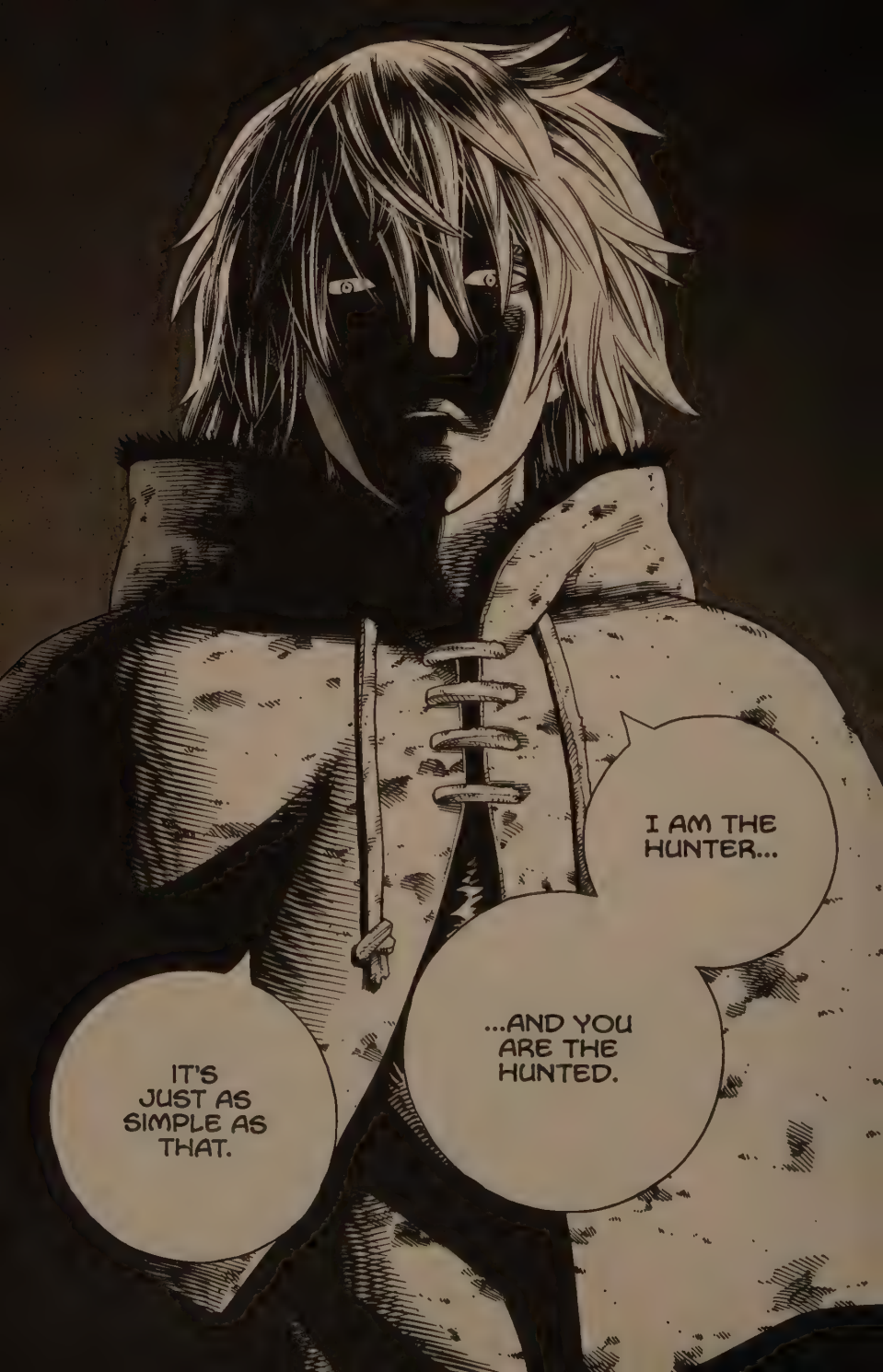

WHY?
WHY DID YOU KILL MY FAMILY?

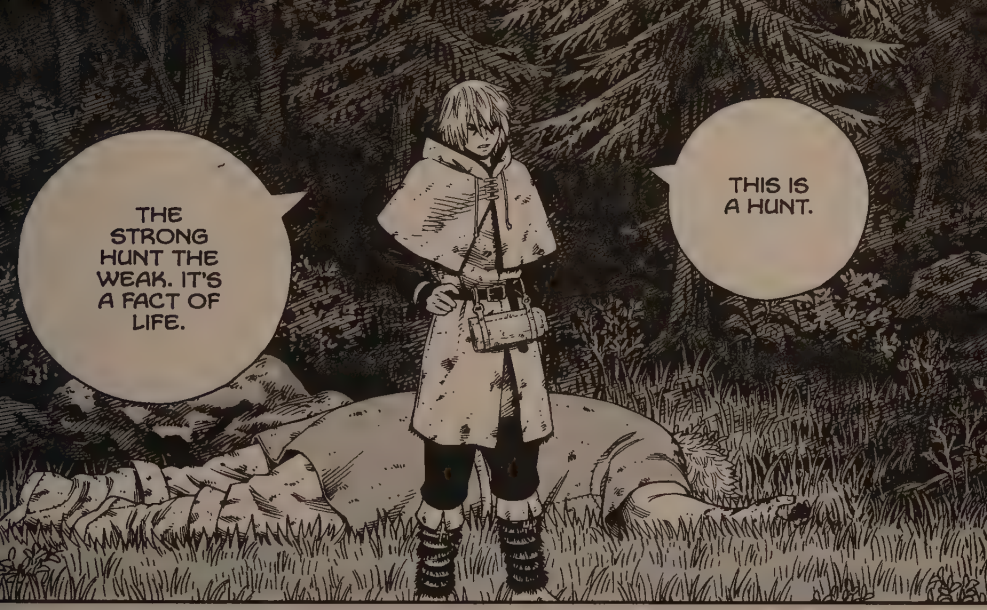

WHY DID YOU DO THAT?

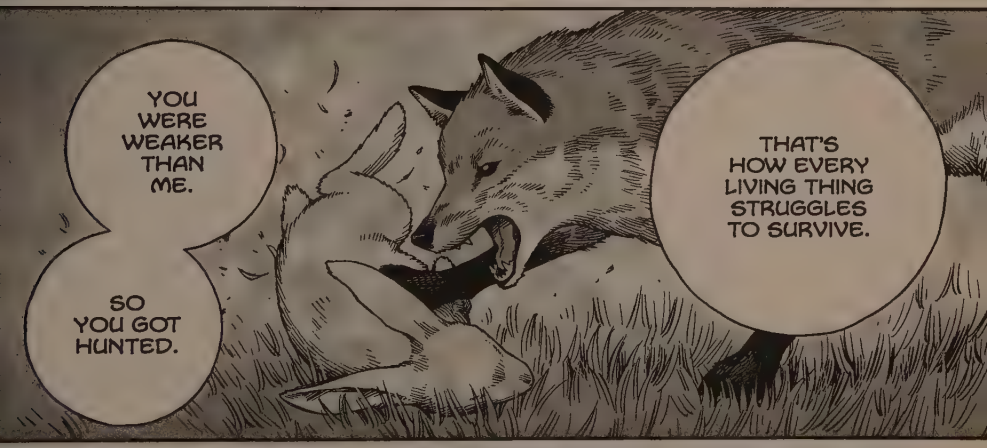
GET LOST.
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOU.

TCH!

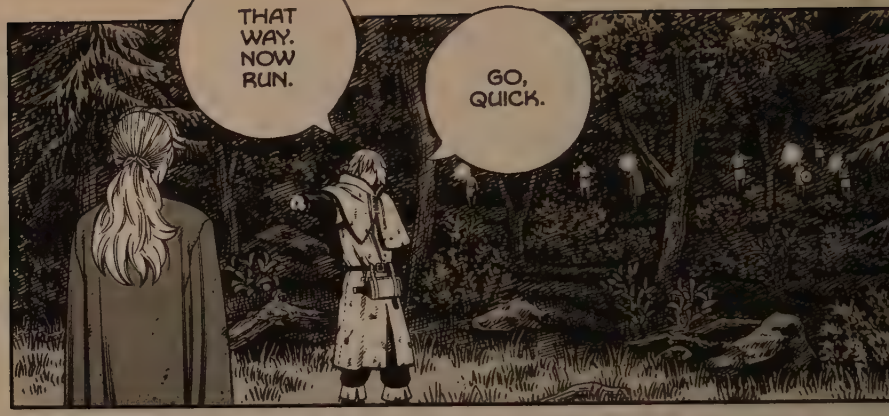
DID MY FATHER DO...
...SOME-THING WRONG TO YOU PEOPLE?

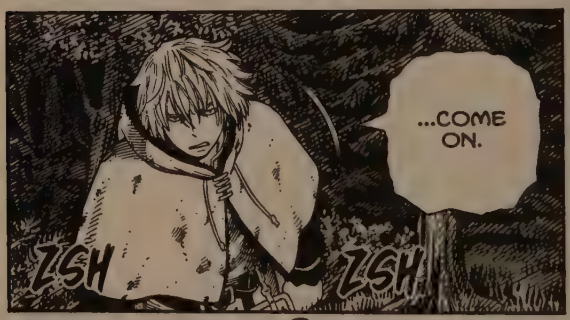

I AM THE HUNTER...
...AND YOU ARE THE HUNTED.
IT'S JUST AS SIMPLE AS THAT.

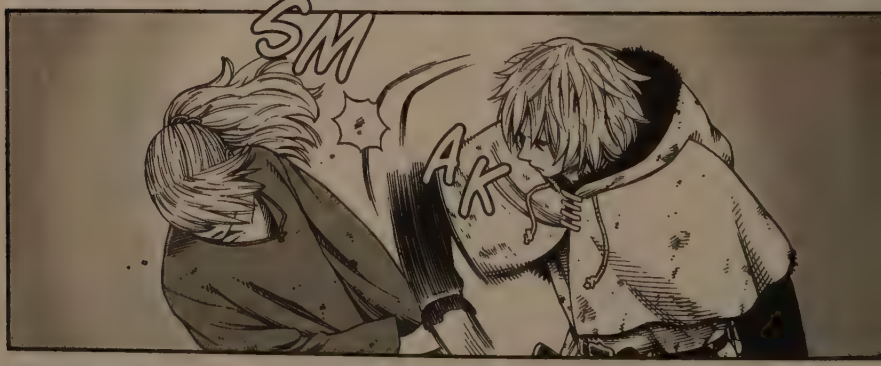

THE STRONG HUNT THE WEAK. IT'S A FACT OF LIFE.
THIS IS A HUNT.


YOU WERE WEAKER THAN ME.
SO YOU GOT HUNTED.
THAT'S HOW EVERY LIVING THING STRUGGLES TO SURVIVE.

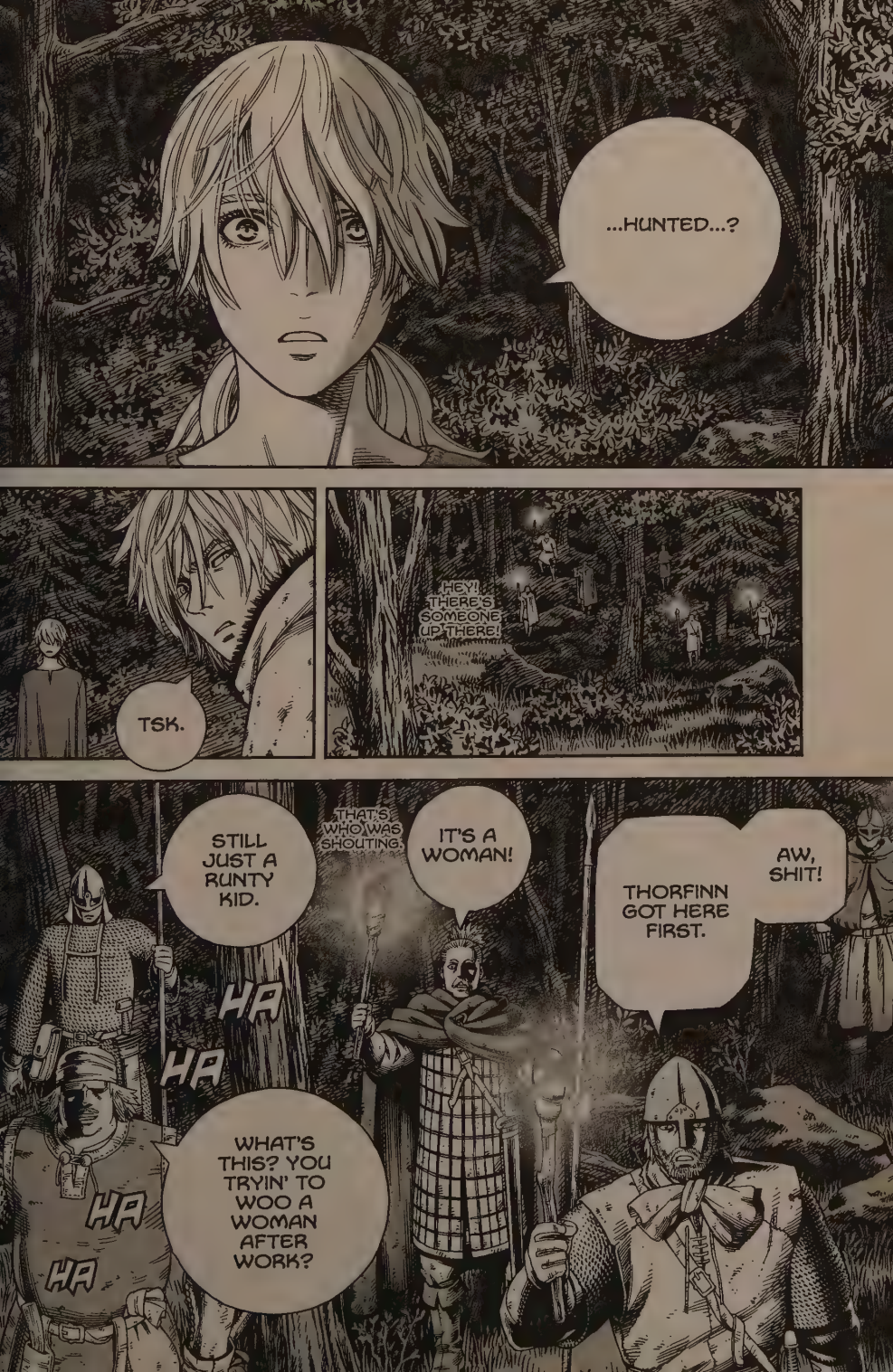
IF YOU WANT TO HATE ANY-THING, HATE YOUR OWN WEAKNESS.


THAT WAY. NOW RUN.
GO, QUICK.


...COME ON.
ZSH
ZSH


SM
AK

DID THAT WAKE YOU UP?
GET LOST.


...HUNTED...?
TSK.
HEY! THERE'S SOMEONE UP THERE!
STILL JUST A RUNTY KID.
THAT'S WHO WAS SHOUTING.
IT'S A WOMAN!
AW, SHIT!
THORFINN GOT HERE FIRST.
HA
HA
HA
HA
WHAT'S THIS? YOU TRYIN' TO WOO A WOMAN AFTER WORK?

I'LL BE HUNTED, TOO.

EVERY-ONE...

MY WHOLE FAMILY WAS HUNTED.

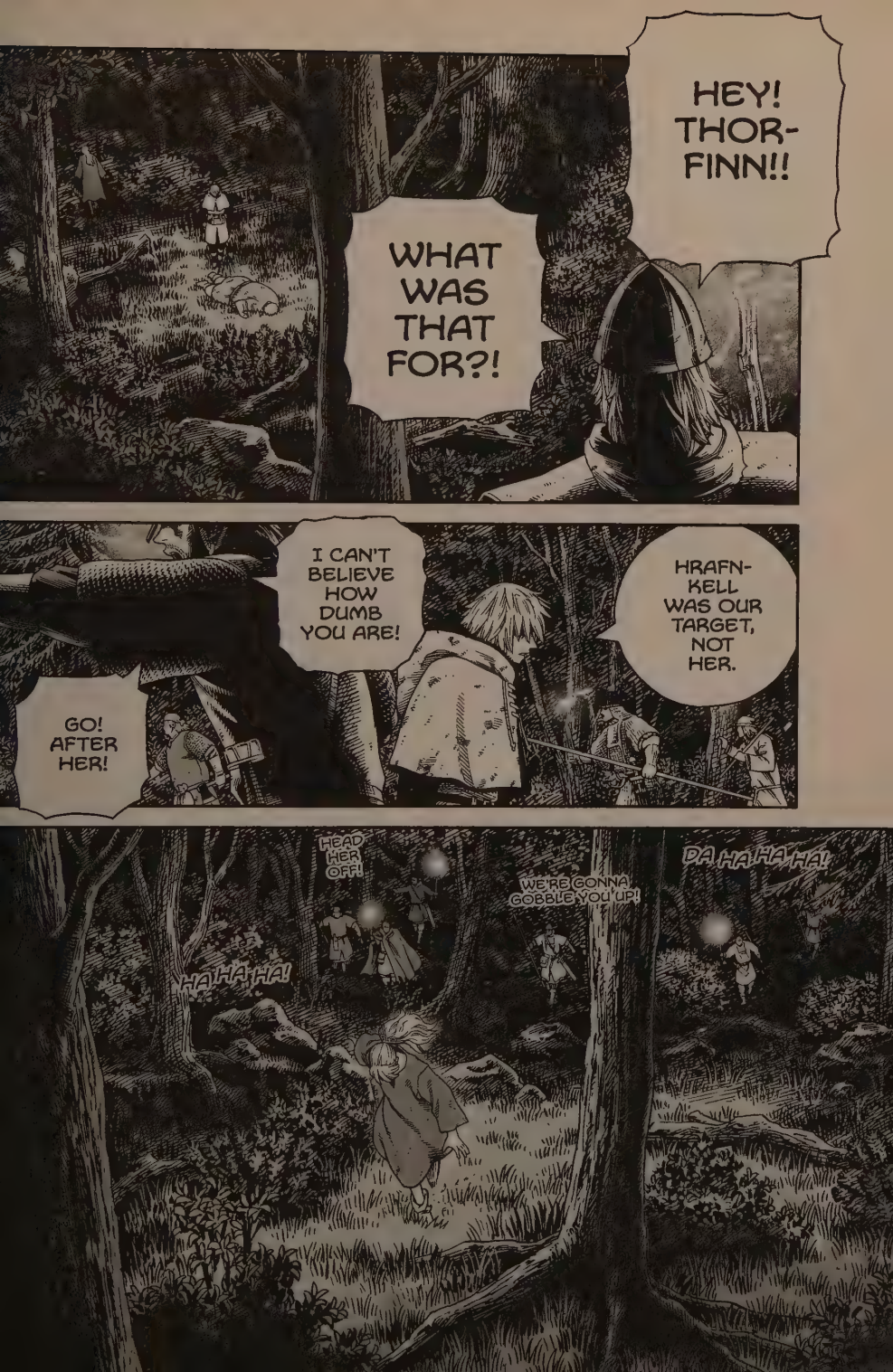
BECAUSE THEY'RE STRONG...

...AND WE'RE WEAK.

GEH HA HA HA!

WAIT UP, LITTLE GIRL!

WE'RE WEAK.


HEY! THOR-FINN!!
WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!
I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW DUMB YOU ARE!
HRAFN-KELL WAS OUR TARGET, NOT HER.
GO! AFTER HER!
HEAD HER OFF!
WE'RE GONNA GOBBLE YOU UP!
DA HA HA HA!
HA HA HA!

CRAKK
SHOULD WE CLIMB DOWN AND GET HER?
NAH. SHE'S JUST ONE LITTLE GIRL.
THORFINN ALREADY TOOK CARE OF HRAFNKELL FOR US.
SPLAAASH...
UH-OH.
THAT WAS WATER.
GUESS IT MUST BE MARSH DOWN THERE.

EXAAAAAAAAH
CRAK
CRUK
CRAK
ZRRP
!
FWOOP
SHE FELL!
AAAAAH
WE MIGHT'VE OVER-DONE IT.
UH, WHOOPS.

I'M WEAK...

...SO I'M HUNTED.

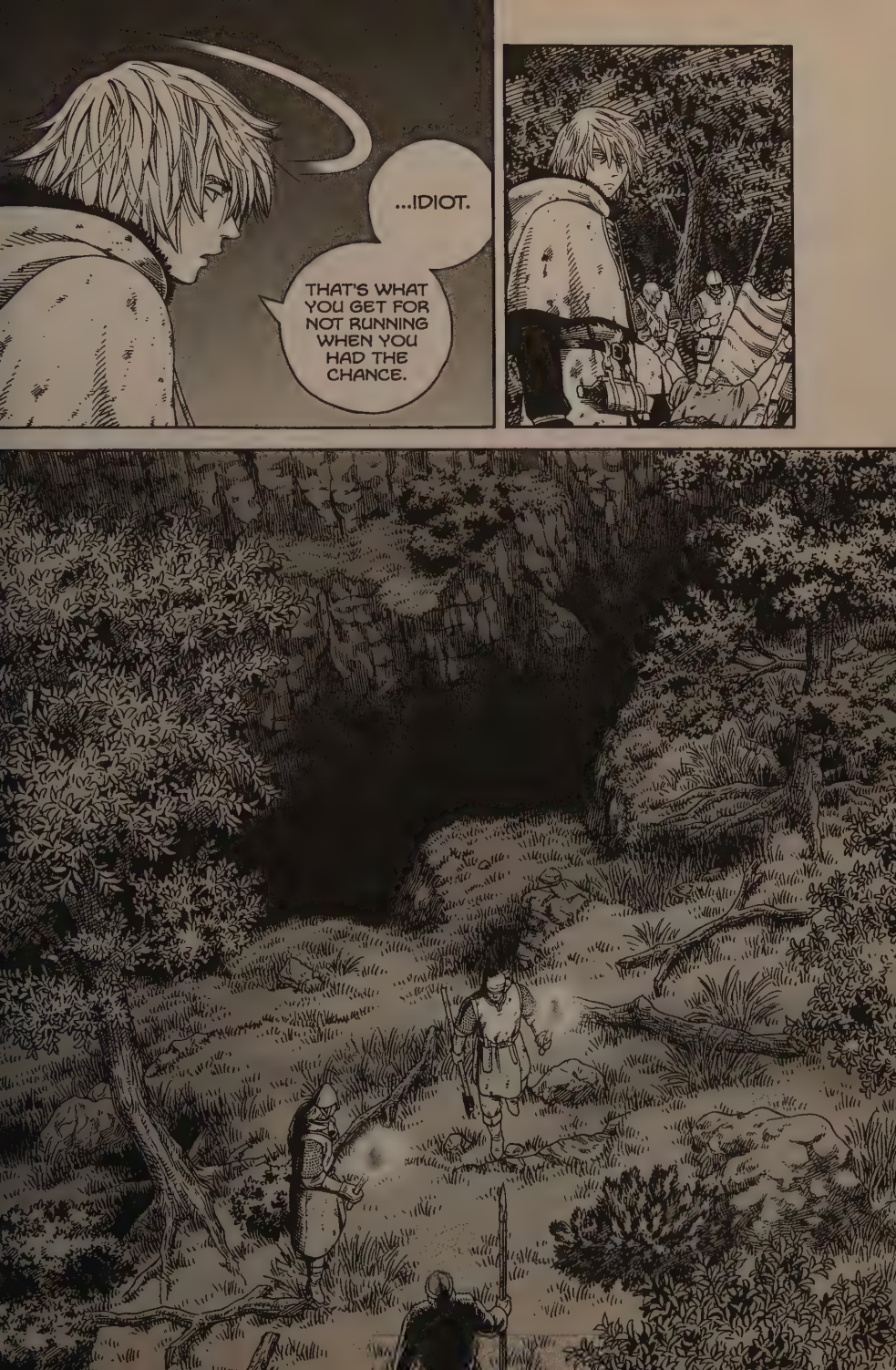
I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT.

FORGIVE YOUR FELLOW MAN.

YOU DON'T MEAN... THOSE MURDER-ERS?

WHO WOULD I FORGIVE? YOU? MYSELF?

WHY...WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT, FATHER?


...IDIOT.
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR NOT RUNNING WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE.

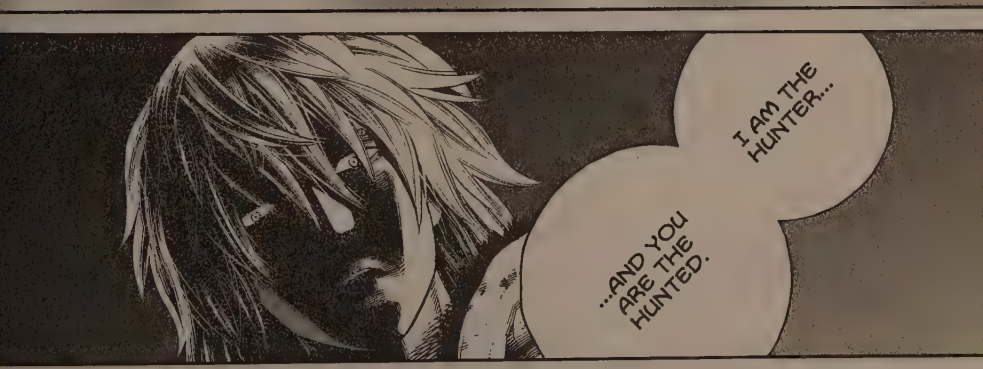
I CANNOT FORGIVE.

...THAT MEANS ACCEPTING THAT I EXIST TO BE HUNTED.

IF I FORGIVE THEM...

I CAN'T.

I CAN'T FORGIVE THEM.



...MYSELF, FOR BEING HUNTED.

I CANNOT FORGIVE...

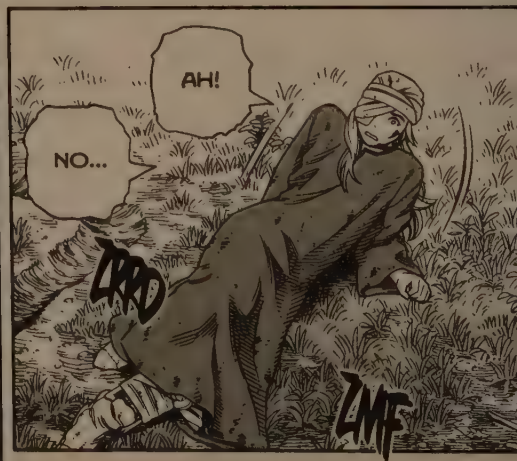
...THOSE KILLERS.

I CANNOT FORGIVE...

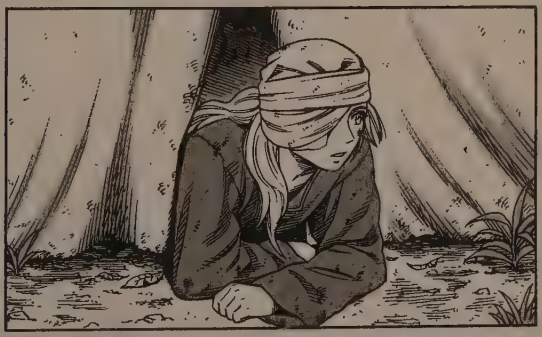
KSHU
SHAK
ZZ SHK

CRUNCH
KRAK
KSHR

SHUFF


AH!
NO...
LARD
LMF

OUCH!



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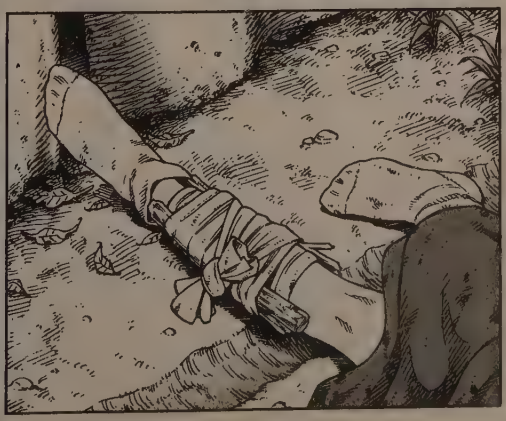
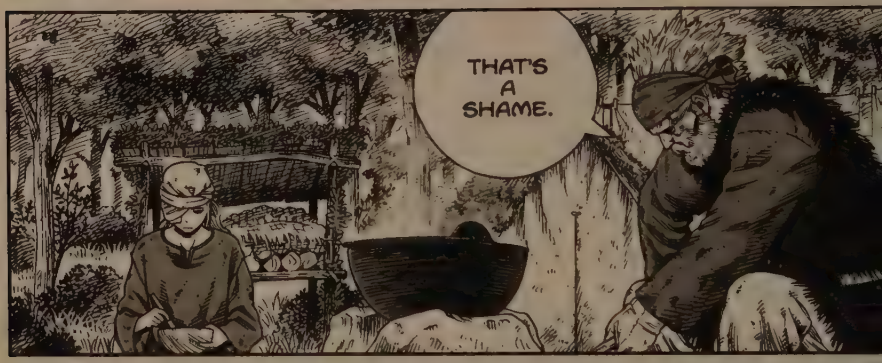
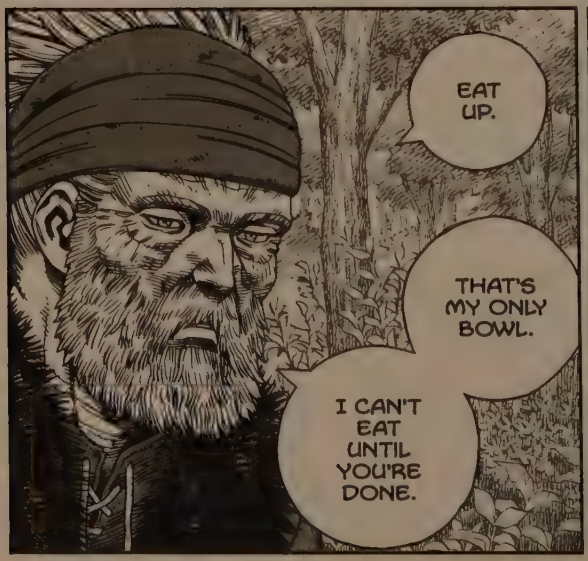
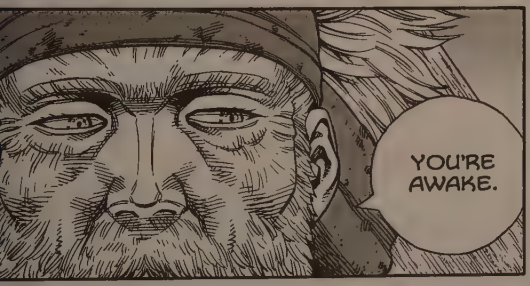


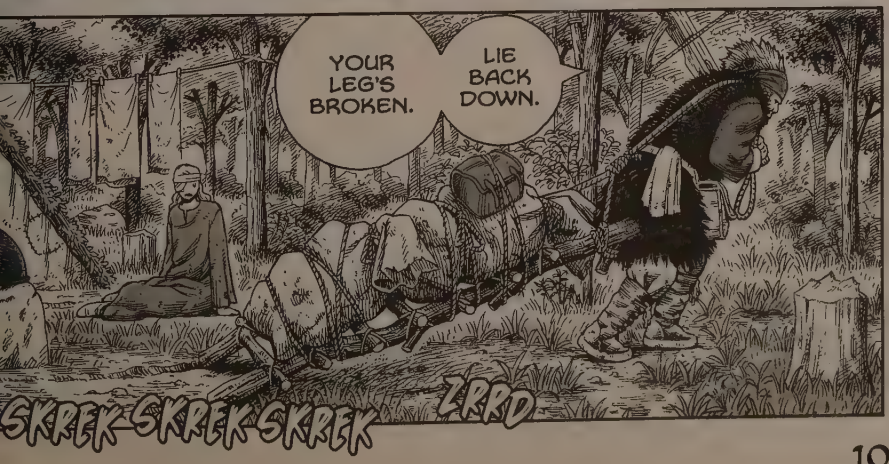
I SEE.
SO YOU'RE FROM THE CALM FJORD.

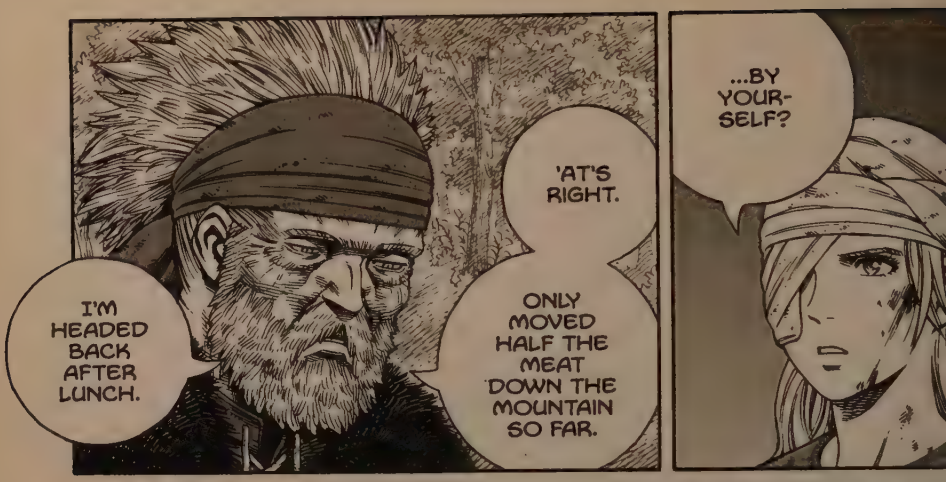

THAT'S A SHAME.

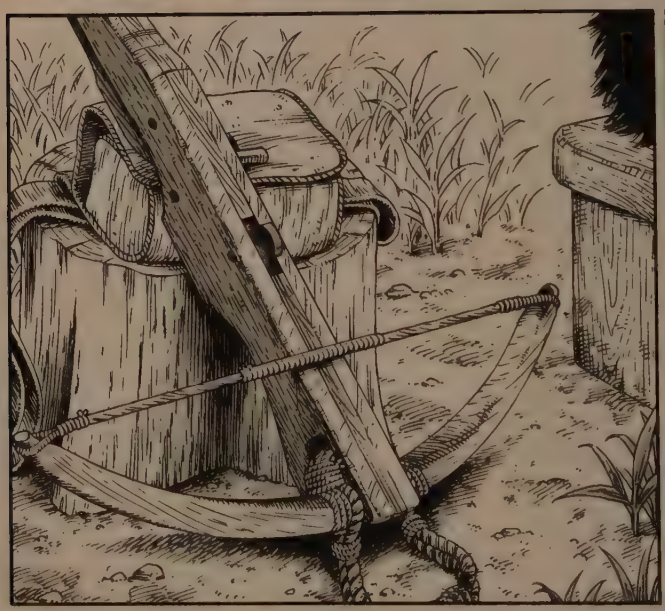

EAT UP.
THAT'S MY ONLY BOWL.
I CAN'T EAT UNTIL YOU'RE DONE.

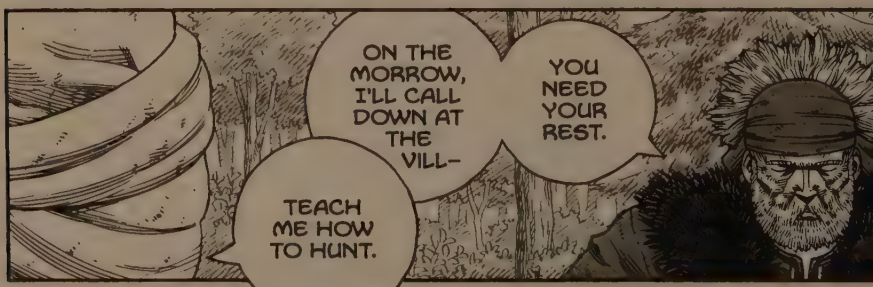

YOU'RE AWAKE.

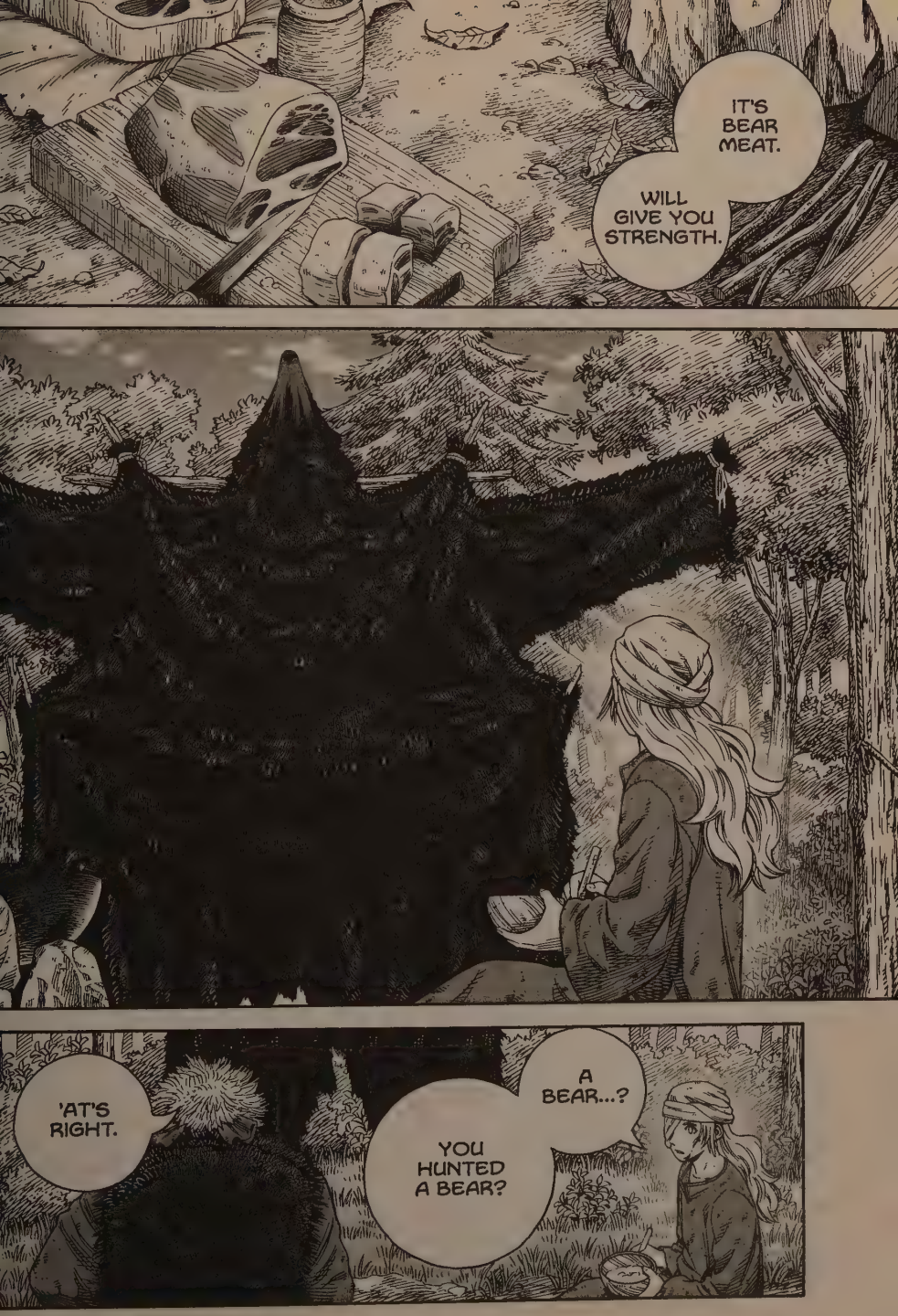
...


YOUR LEG'S BROKEN.
LIE BACK DOWN.
SKREK-SKREK-SKREK
ZRRD

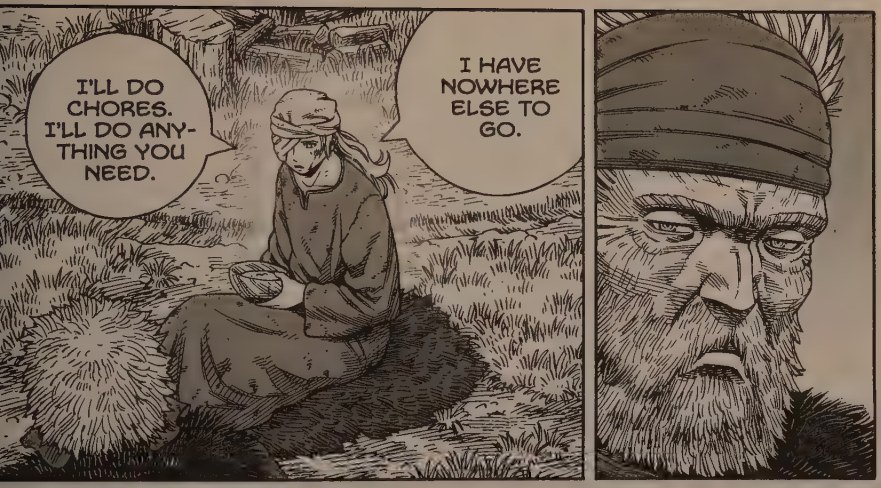

I'M HEADED BACK AFTER LUNCH.
'AT'S RIGHT.
ONLY MOVED HALF THE MEAT DOWN THE MOUNTAIN SO FAR.
...BY YOUR-SELF?

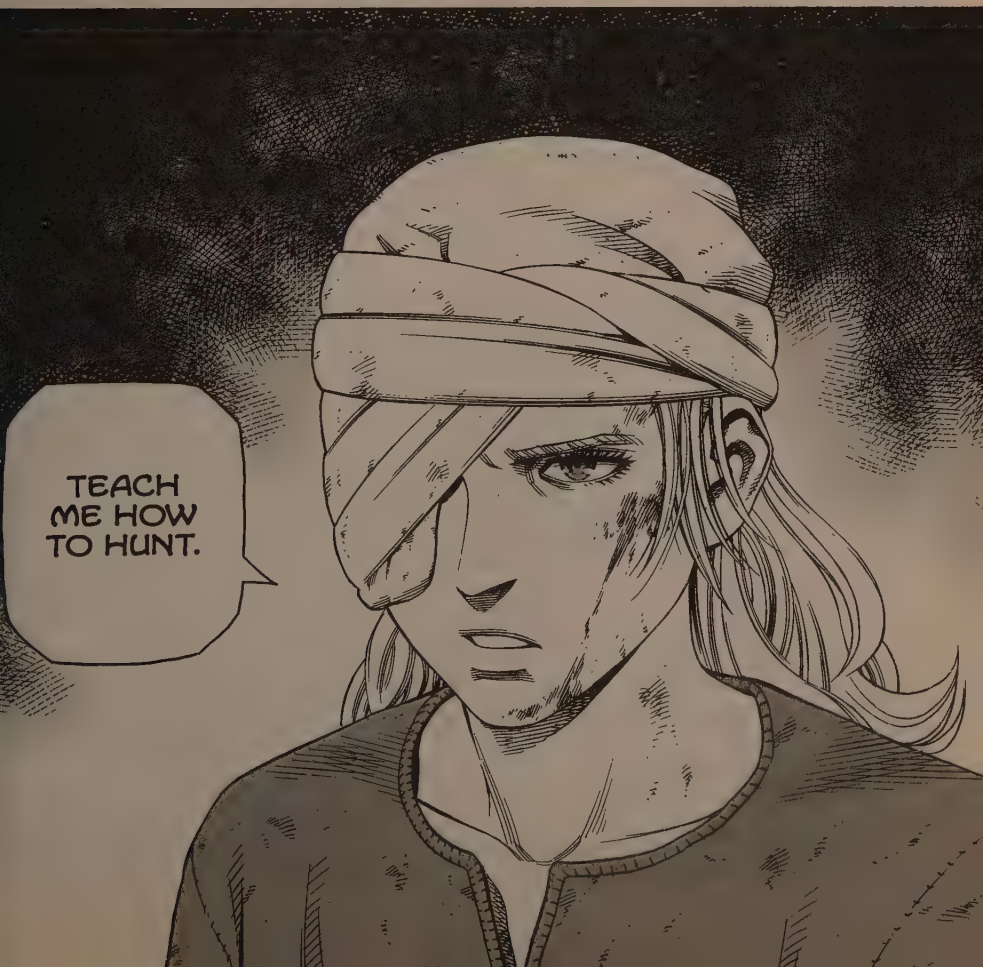



ON THE MORROW, I'LL CALL DOWN AT THE VILL-
YOU NEED YOUR REST.
TEACH ME HOW TO HUNT.


IT'S BEAR MEAT.
WILL GIVE YOU STRENGTH.
'AT'S RIGHT.
YOU HUNTED A BEAR?
A BEAR...?

CHAPTER 120:
THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (7)


I'LL DO CHORES. I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU NEED.
I HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.


TEACH ME HOW TO HUNT.

SHK
ZSHK
SHK
WHA...
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
WHAT POWERFUL LEGS HE HAS...!

SHUK
ZSHUK

MOVE-MENT.

IT'S THREE. ONE FEMALE, TWO FAWNS.

DEER... FOUR.

ONE MALE, THREE FEMALE.

TIME.

BACK-WARD. FROM UPSLOPE TO DOWN.

THEY WERE... THEY ATE IT.

THEY ATE THE BARK HERE...

GOING FROM BELOW... TO ABOVE?

WORK HARDER.

YES, SIR...

MID-DAY, TWO DAYS AGO.

...YESTER-DAY...AT NIGHT...

HERE. READ THESE.

Y-

YES, SIR...

YOUR HAIR.

IT'S OVER YOUR EARS.

Y-YES, SIR!

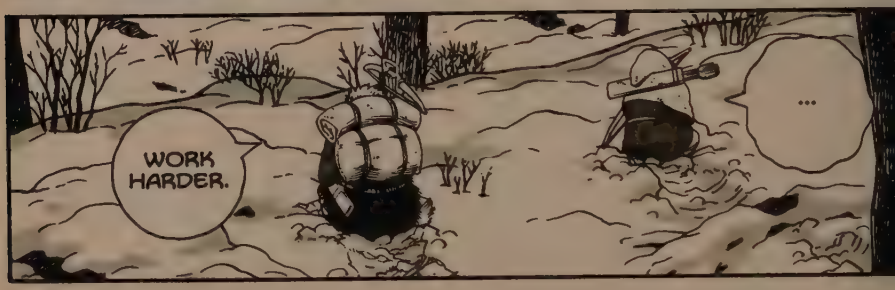
SORRY ABOUT THAT.

HUFF

FFH

HUFF

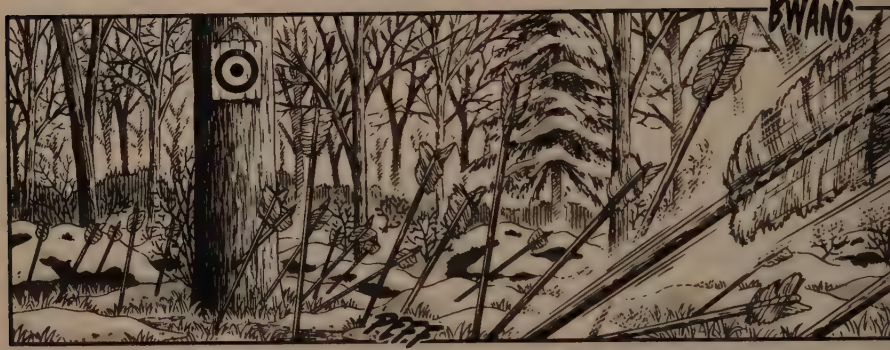
PUFF


WORK HARDER.
...

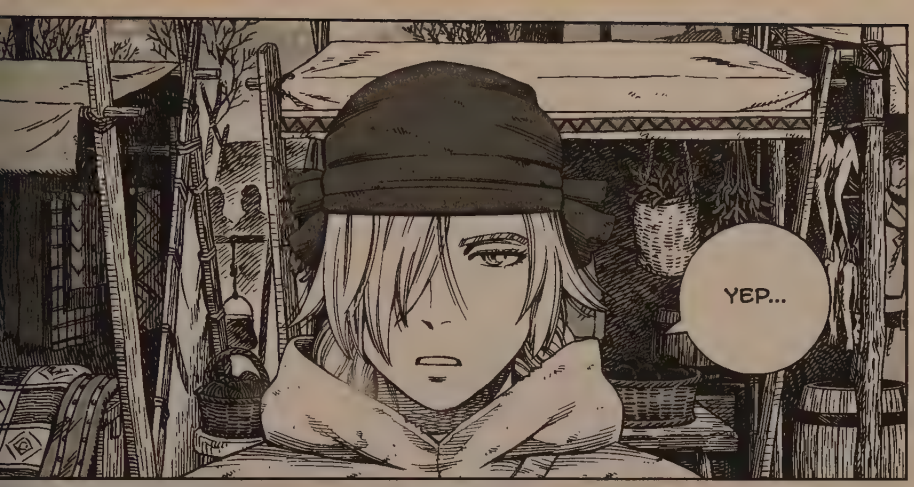
OLD BEAR-MAN'S APPREN-TICE?!
WHAAAT ?!

KRK..
BWANG
TIKA
TIKA
TIKA
RGH...

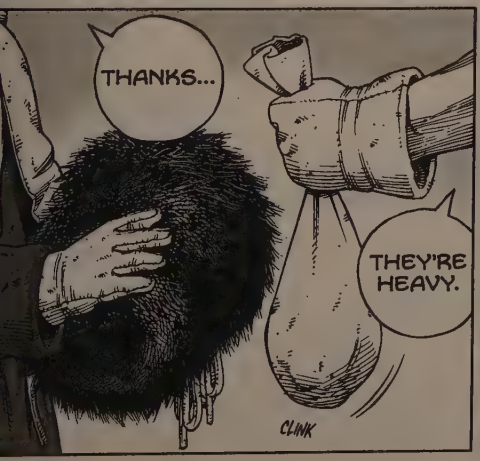
SO YOU'RE GONNA BE A HUNTER, EH...?
YOUNG GIRLS THESE DAYS SURE ARE WEIRD!


B.WANG
PFFT

B.WANG


YEP...

CLAAANG
WELL... YEAH...
I'M... RUNNING AN ERRAND...
BUT... YOU'RE A WOMAN.
CLAAANG

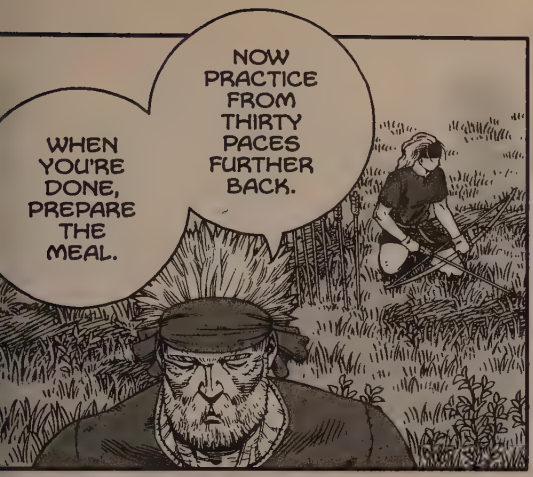

THANKS...
THEY'RE HEAVY.
CLINK

IN EXCHANGE FOR ONE BEAR PELT.
AH, OF COURSE. I'VE GOT THE SIXTY ARROW-HEADS, RIGHT HERE.

T
AKK
GRK...
TAKKK
BAM

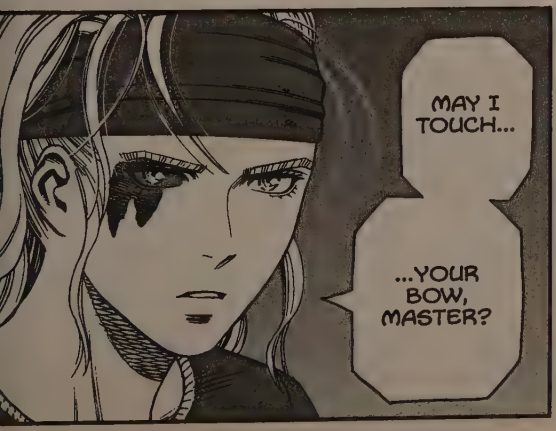
YES, MASTER!
WORK HARDER.
A HUNDRED MORE, AND IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO PREPARE THE MEAL.
BWANG
BWANG
THAUT
BWANG
BWANG
BWANG

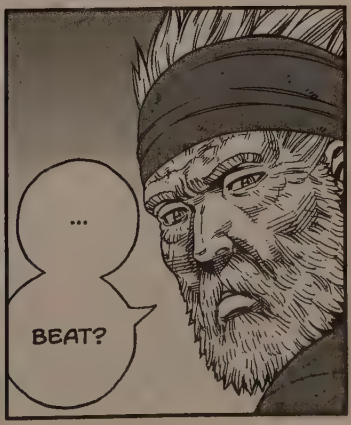
IT'S CALLED A CROSS-BOW.
YOU AIM IT, THEN PULL THE TRIGGER.
BAM
WOOM
CHAAK

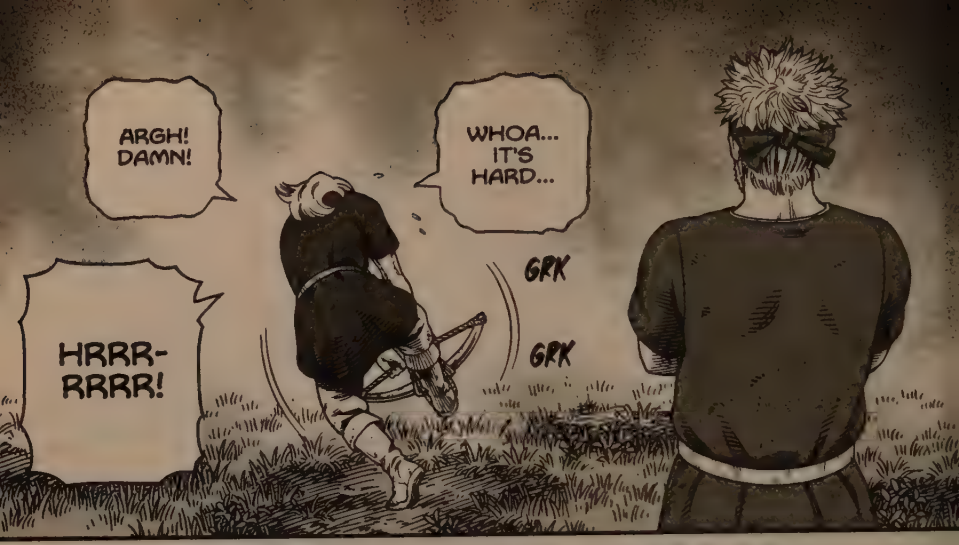

WHEN YOU'RE DONE, PREPARE THE MEAL.
NOW PRACTICE FROM THIRTY PACES FURTHER BACK.

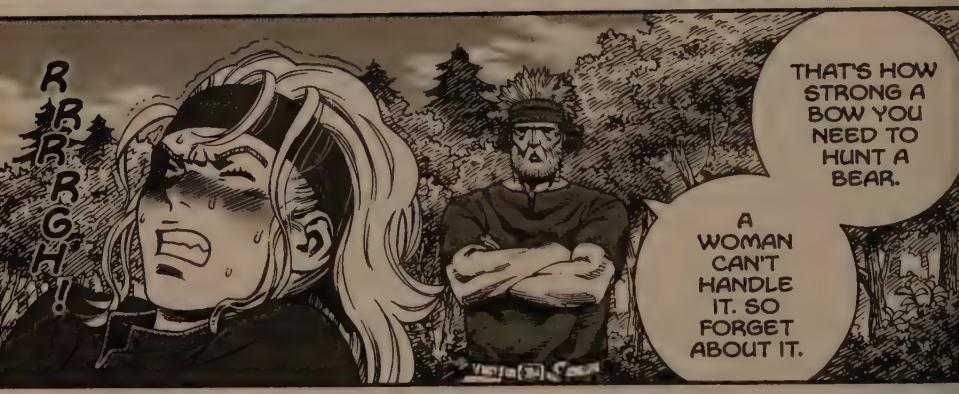
GOOD.
BAM

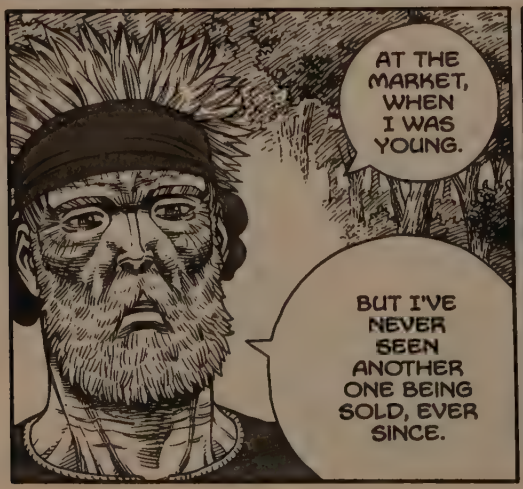
MASTER...
...CAN I BEAT A BEAR WITH THIS BOW?

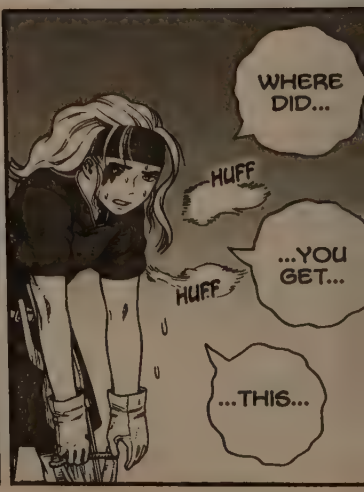

MAY I TOUCH...
...YOUR BOW, MASTER?

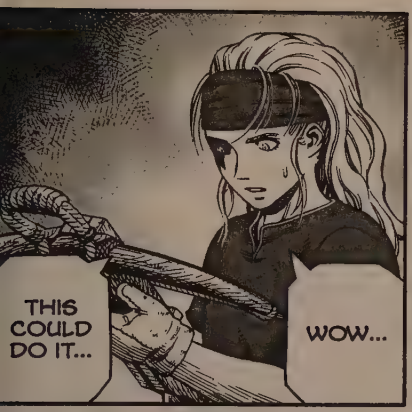

...
BEAT?

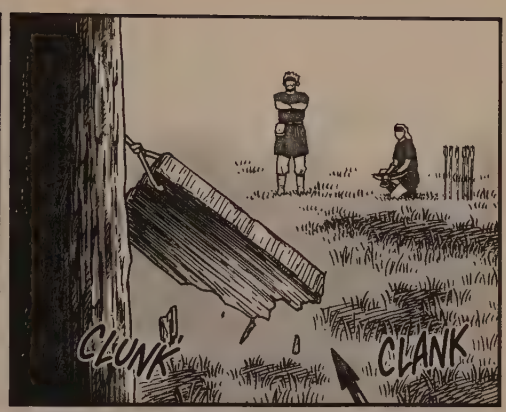

ARGH! DAMN!
WHOA... IT'S HARD...
HRRR-RRRR!
GRK
GRK


RRRGH!
THAT'S HOW STRONG A BOW YOU NEED TO HUNT A BEAR.
A WOMAN CAN'T HANDLE IT. SO FORGET ABOUT IT.

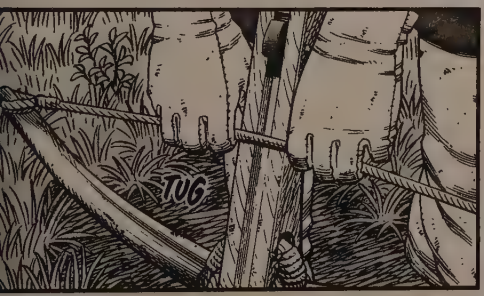

AT THE MARKET, WHEN I WAS YOUNG.
BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN ANOTHER ONE BEING SOLD, EVER SINCE.

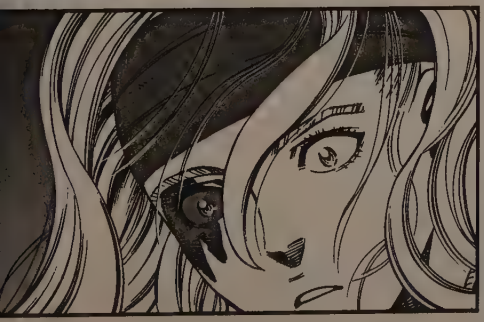

WHERE DID...
HUFF
...YOU GET...
HUFF
...THIS...


THIS COULD DO IT...
WOW...

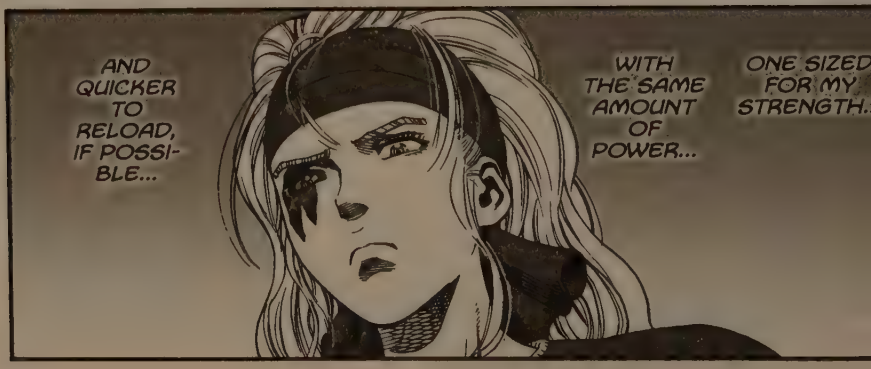

CLUNK
CLANK

PUT YOUR FOOT IN THE STIRRUP, PULL THE STRING WITH BOTH HANDS, AND PLACE IT ON THE NUT.
NOW LOAD IT.

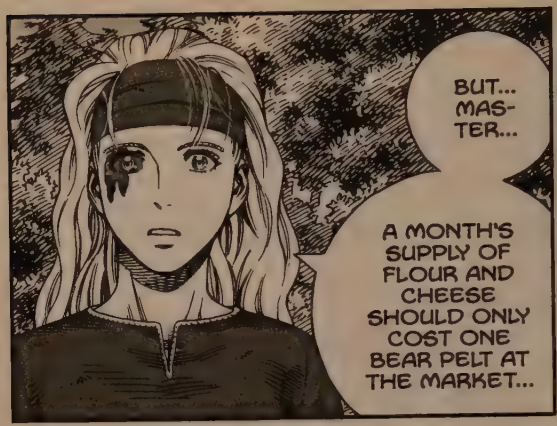

TUG

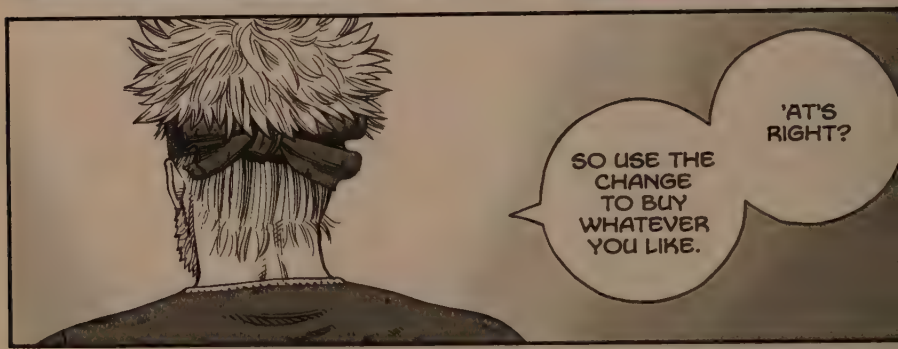


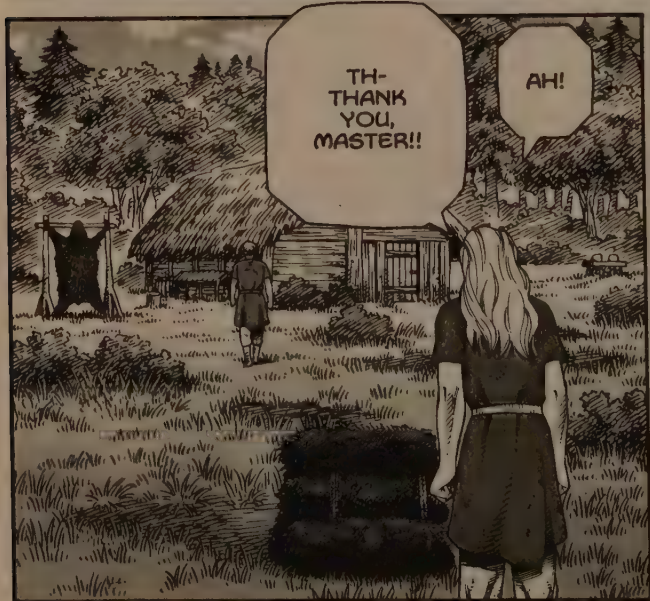
LIKE... THIS?

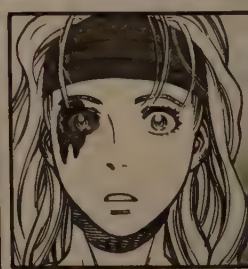

AND QUICKER TO RELOAD, IF POSSIBLE...
WITH THE SAME AMOUNT OF POWER...
ONE SIZED FOR MY STRENGTH...

...THANK YOU.
I UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM.
I WILL MAKE ONE.
I'LL MAKE A CROSSBOW THAT A WOMAN CAN USE...
...
...MAKE?


BUT... MAS-TER...
A MONTH'S SUPPLY OF FLOUR AND CHEESE SHOULD ONLY COST ONE BEAR PELT AT THE MARKET...


SO USE THE CHANGE TO BUY WHATEVER YOU LIKE.
'AT'S RIGHT?


TH-THANK YOU, MASTER!!
AH!



STURDY... I'LL NEED OAK OR WALNUT.

IT MUST BE SIMPLE.

LEVEL... PULLEY... WIND...

NO. THAT WILL MAKE IT HEAVIER, AND THE MORE COMPLEX, THE EASIER IT BREAKS.

CAN I ASK THAT SMITH TO MAKE THE METAL PARTS...?

BUT I DON'T HAVE A SINGLE TOOL TO MY NAME...

I HAVE TO MAKE IT MYSELF.

FATHER CAN'T HELP ME OUT ANYMORE.

FWUMP

HILD.

GO TO THE MARKET AND BUY A MONTH'S SUPPLY OF FLOUR AND CHEESE.

YES, MASTER.

YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF EFFECT A QUESTION LIKE THAT HAS!

WHAT'S A PROUD CRAFTSMAN TO SAY AFTER A CHALLENGE LIKE THAT, OTHER THAN, "I'LL HAVE IT DONE RIGHT AWAY"?!

OOH, I DON'T LIKE YOU!

WHAT?! HEY!

IS IT TOO DIFFI-CULT?

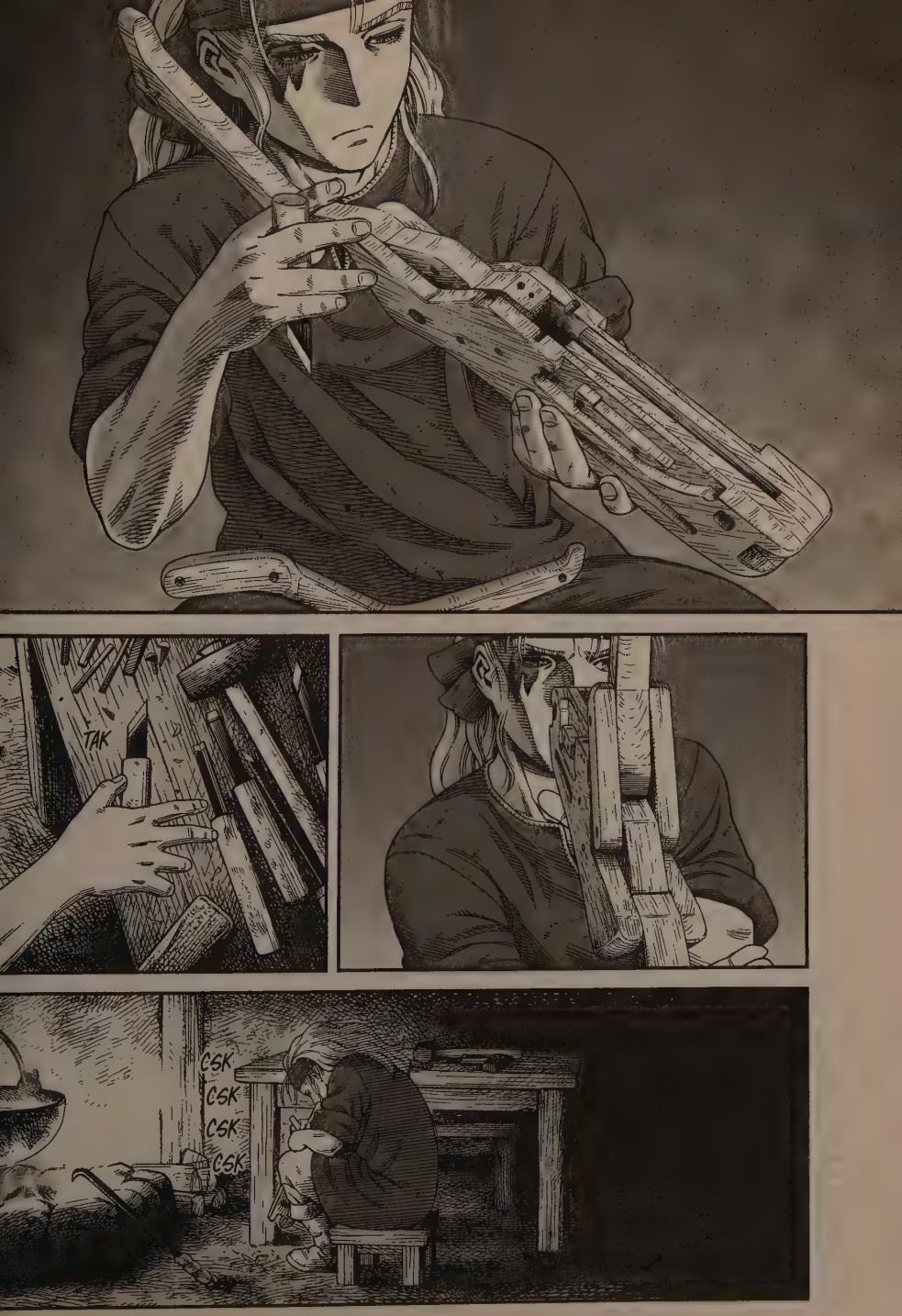
WHEW...

SHIK SHIK SHIK SHIK SHIK SHIK

GRRK GRRK SHIK GRRK GRRK GRRK

YOU WANT... TO MAKE *THIS*?
OUT OF IRON?
THIS IS... REALLY SOME-THIN', YOU KNOW?
I'VE NEVER HAD A CUSTOMER BRING IN THEIR OWN DRAW-INGS WHEN ORDERING WORK.
I'VE DRAWN IT AT ACTUAL SIZE.
THIS IS THE FRONT VIEW, THIS IS THE SIDE.

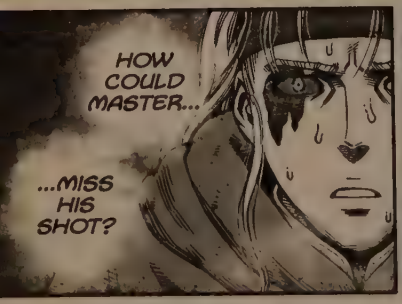
WE'LL SPLIT UP. YOU DRIVE HIM UP-WARD.
THERE SHOULD BE A BEAR ON THE SLOPE BELOW.
A FIVE-YEAR-OLD MALE, HAV-ING TROUBLE SLEEPING.
IT FEELS LIKE YOUR ABILITY TO READ ITS SIGNS IS GOD-GIVEN...
I DON'T FEEL LIKE I'M GETTING ANY CLOSER TO YOUR KNOWL-EDGE, EVEN AFTER ALL THIS EXPERIENCE.
MASTE
...HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THE MOUNTAINS?


TAK
CSK
CSK
CSK
CSK

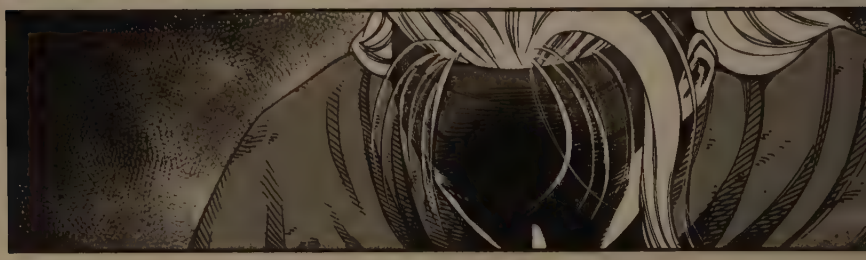
ANIMALS ARE BETTER.
THEY EAT AND ARE EATEN...
...BUT THEY HAVE NO ANGER OR HATRED.
GIVE UP YOUR ANGER, HILD.
YOU DON'T NEED IT ON THE MOUNTAIN.
LET'S BEGIN.
ZSH

WON'T BE TOO LONG BEFORE I MISS MY MARK AND FEED THE BEAR MESELF.
NOT AS GOOD AS I USED TO BE.
MY EYES AND EARS ARE OLDER.
YOU'RE JOKING...
MIGHT EVEN BE TONIGHT.
HILD... THERE IS ANGER IN YOUR HEART.
ANGER CLOUDS YOUR EYES AND EARS.
YOU WON'T SEE *ANYTHING*, MUCH LESS THE MOUNTAIN.

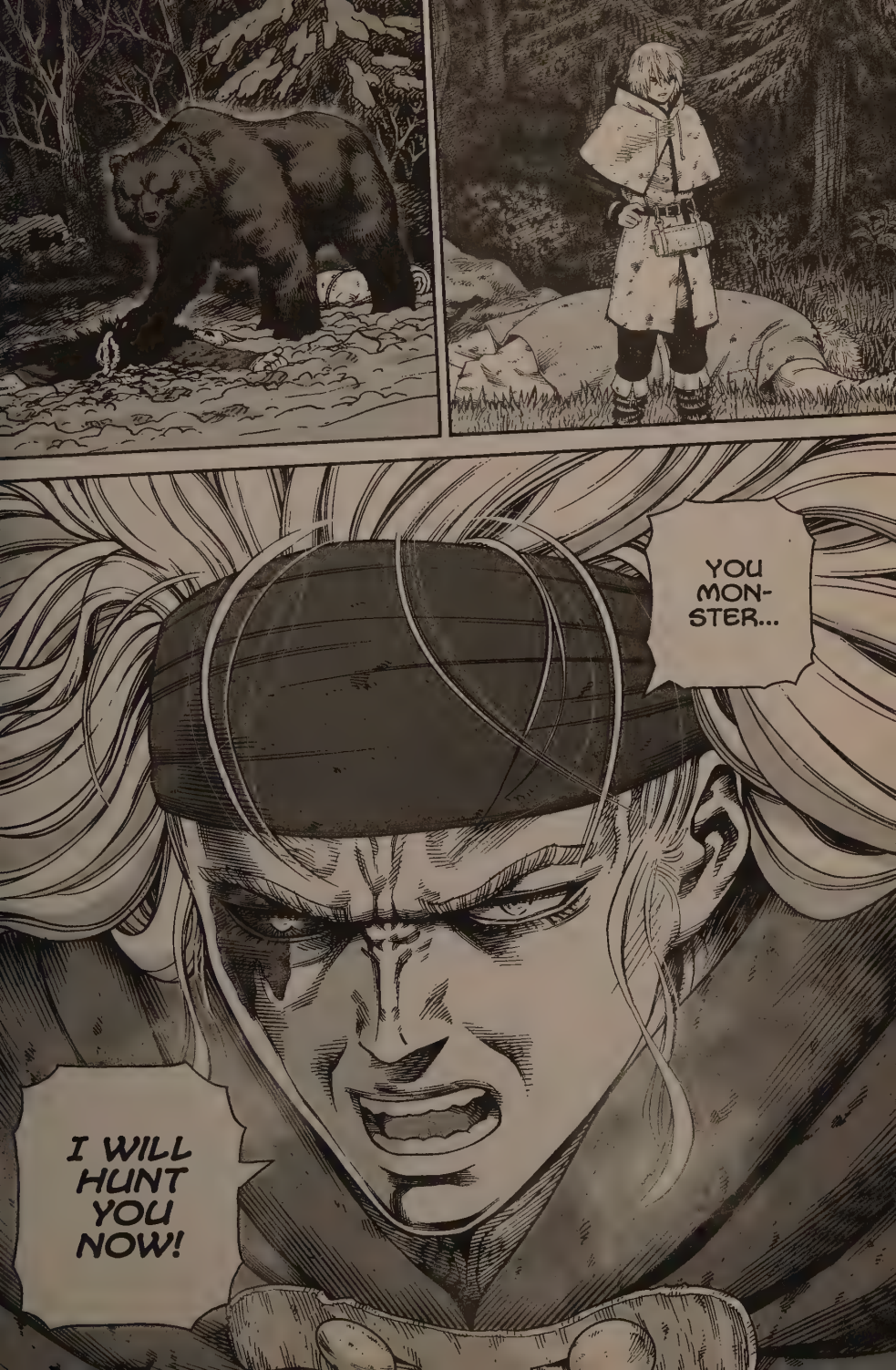
MAS-
TER...

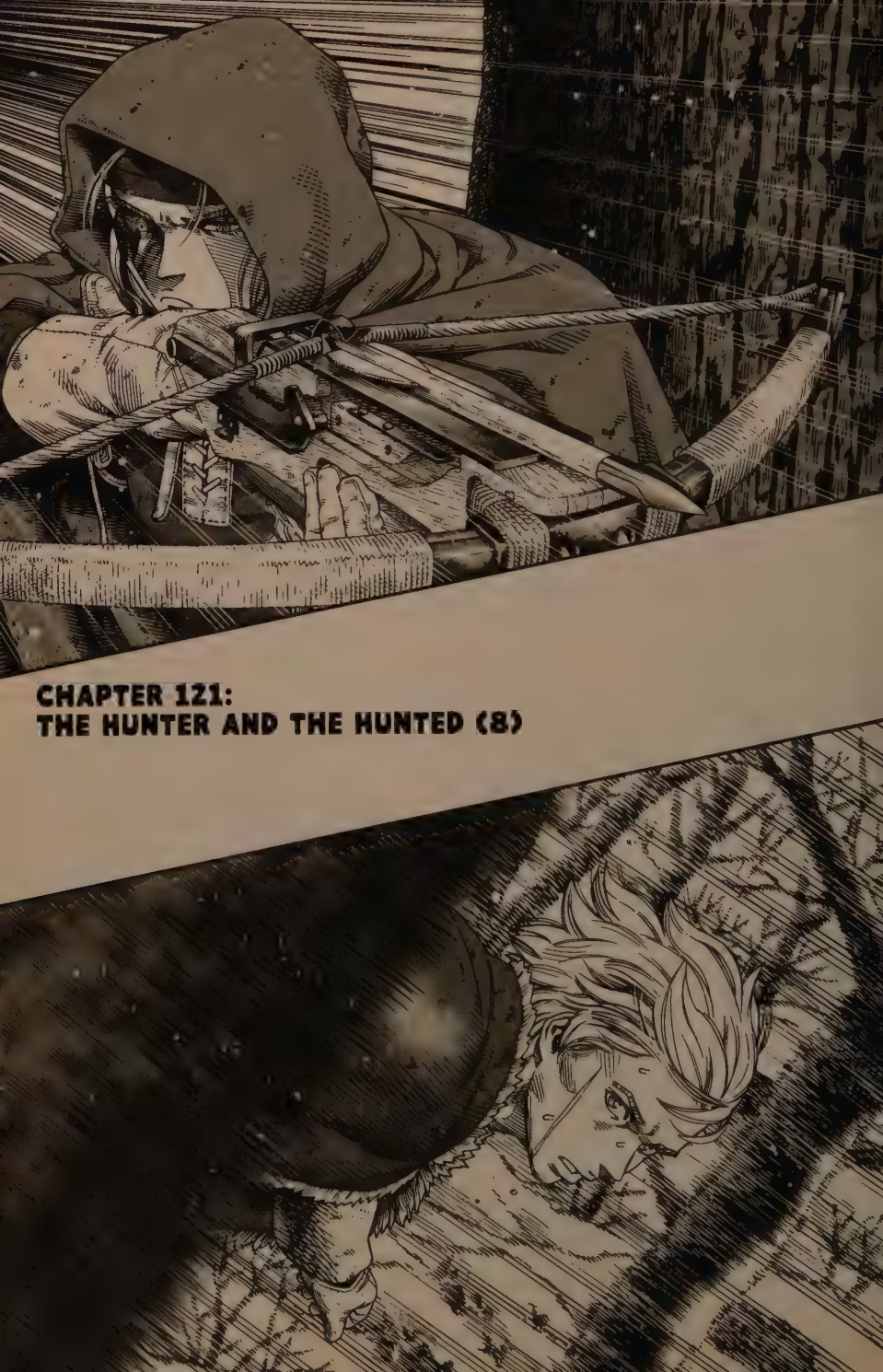


GIVE UP
YOUR ANGER,
HILD.

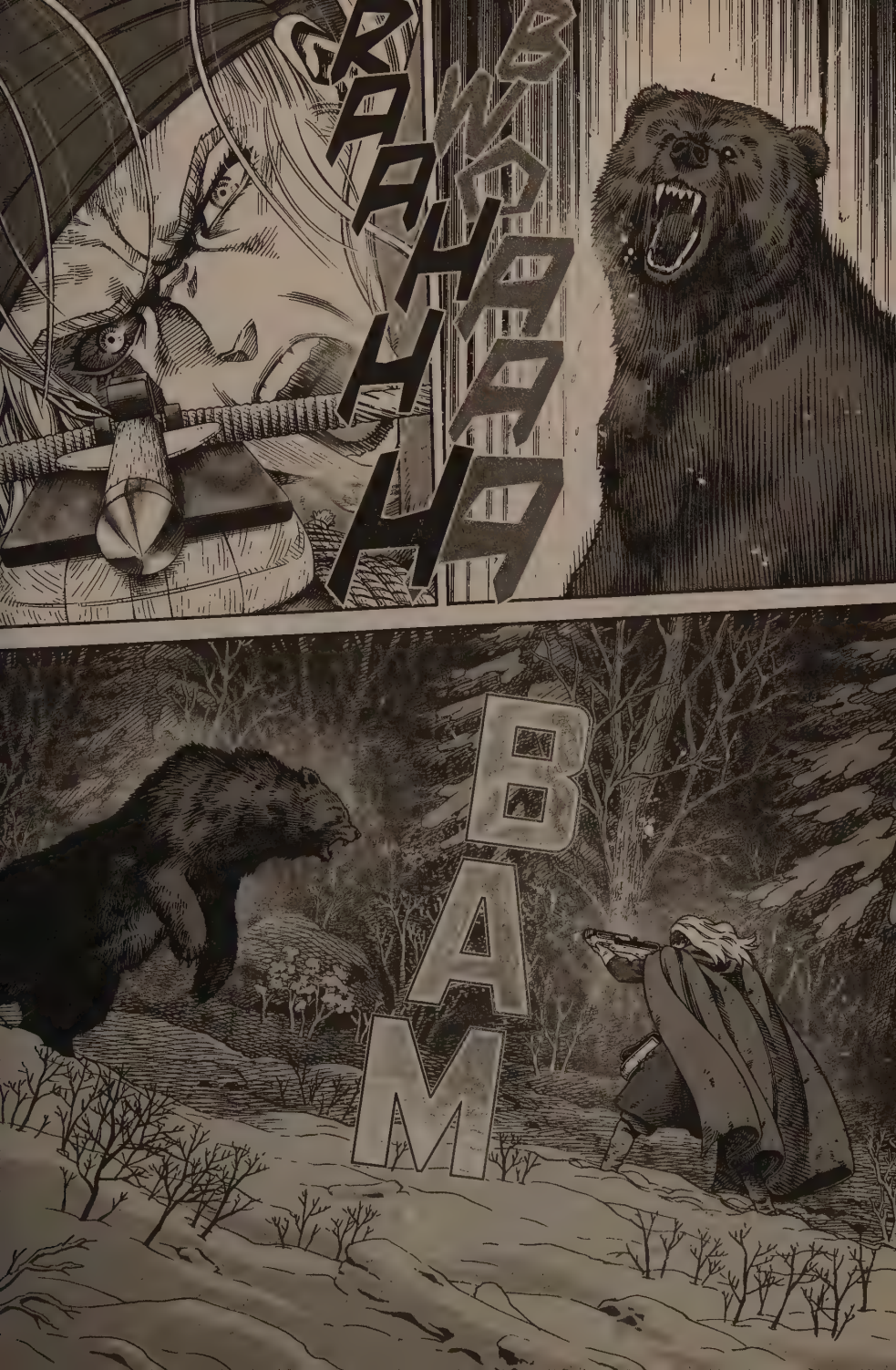


F
WAP


YOU MON-STER...
I WILL HUNT YOU NOW!



CHAPTER 121:
THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (8)


RAAHHH
BWOAAAA
BAM

DAMN IT! THERE'S NO TIME...

I'VE GOT TO GET THAT ANTIDOTE AND RETURN NOW...

I'M ALL OUT OF CLUES TO TRACK HER...
THERE'S NO POINT TO TRYING TO FOLLOW HER TRACKS NOW...
DAMN...

WHAT IS THIS...?

SOME PLOT FOR THORFINN TO ATTRACT MY ATTENTION SO THE OTHERS COULD SNEAK BEHIND ME?

...

NO...THOSE AREN'T THE MOVEMENTS OF A COORDINATED TEAM.

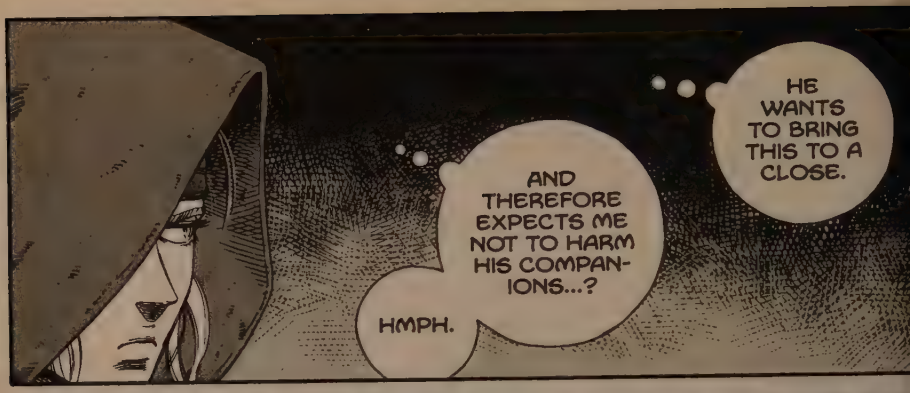
THEY DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM *OR WHERE* THORFINN IS.

!

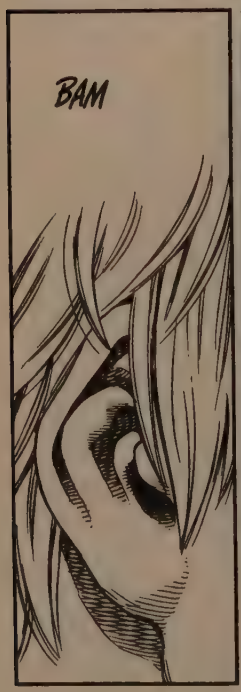
IF THE THREAT OF POISON FAILED TO KEEP THEM THERE, I'LL HAVE TO HIT THEIR LEGS TO IMMOBILIZE THEM...

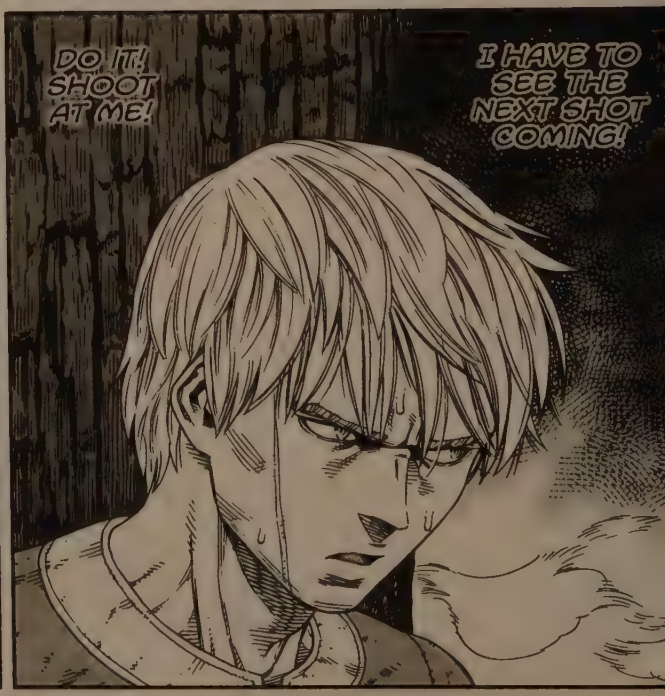
THEY'LL BE EASIER TARGETS THAN THORFINN, I'M SURE.

WHAT IS HE THINKING?! I TOLD HIM TO WAIT...
EINAR ?!
OR JUST SHOOT THEM...?
WILL SHE DESTROY THE ANTIDOTE, AS SHE THREATENED?
HILD WILL HAVE NOTICED THEM, TOO! WHAT WILL SHE DO?!


HE WANTS TO BRING THIS TO A CLOSE.
AND THEREFORE EXPECTS ME NOT TO HARM HIS COMPANIONS...?
HMPH.

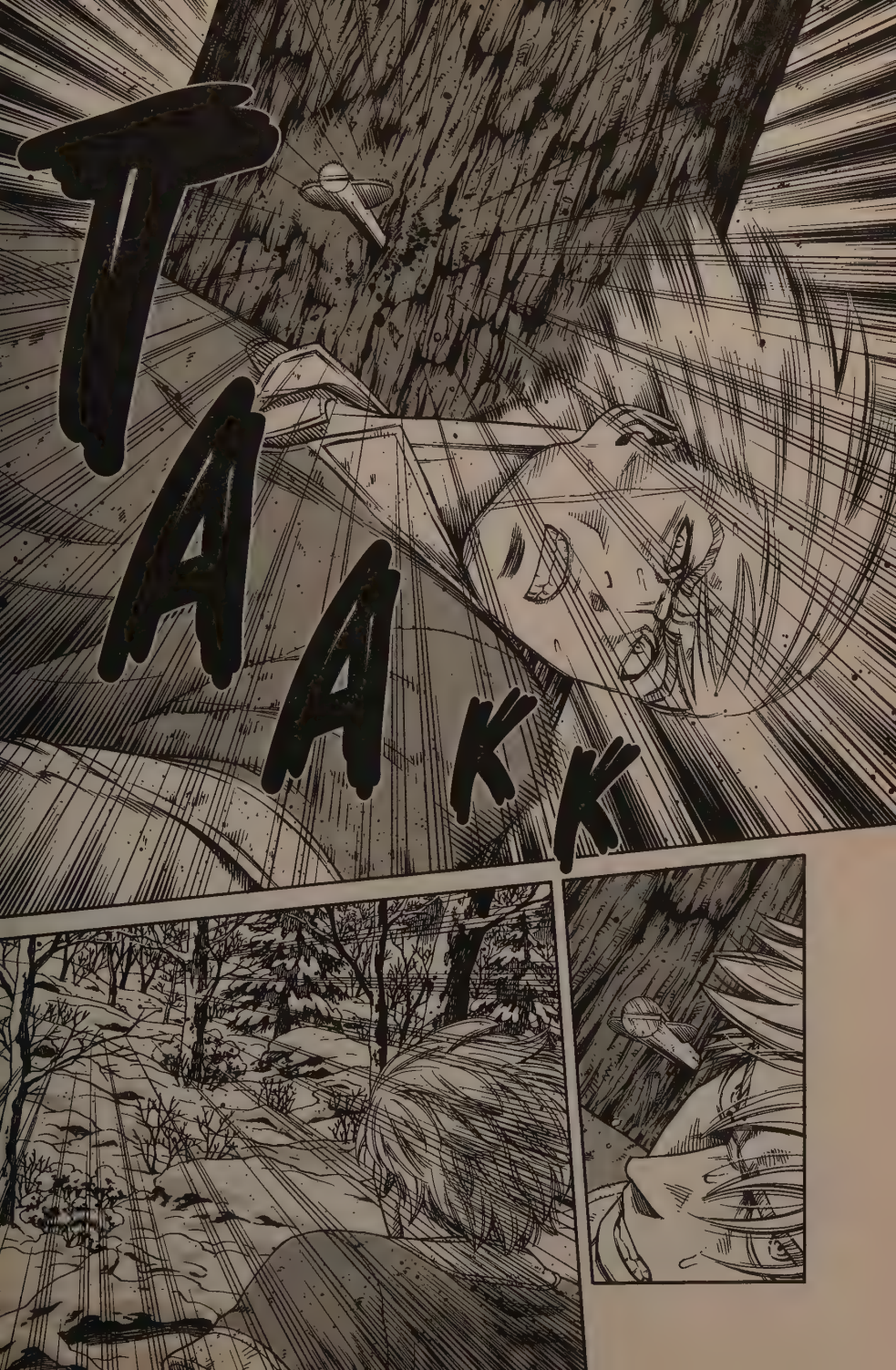
I WILL ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE, THORFINN.
VERY WELL. THIS IS ALL I WANTED.


BAM


DO IT! SHOOT AT ME!
I HAVE TO SEE THE NEXT SHOT COMING!

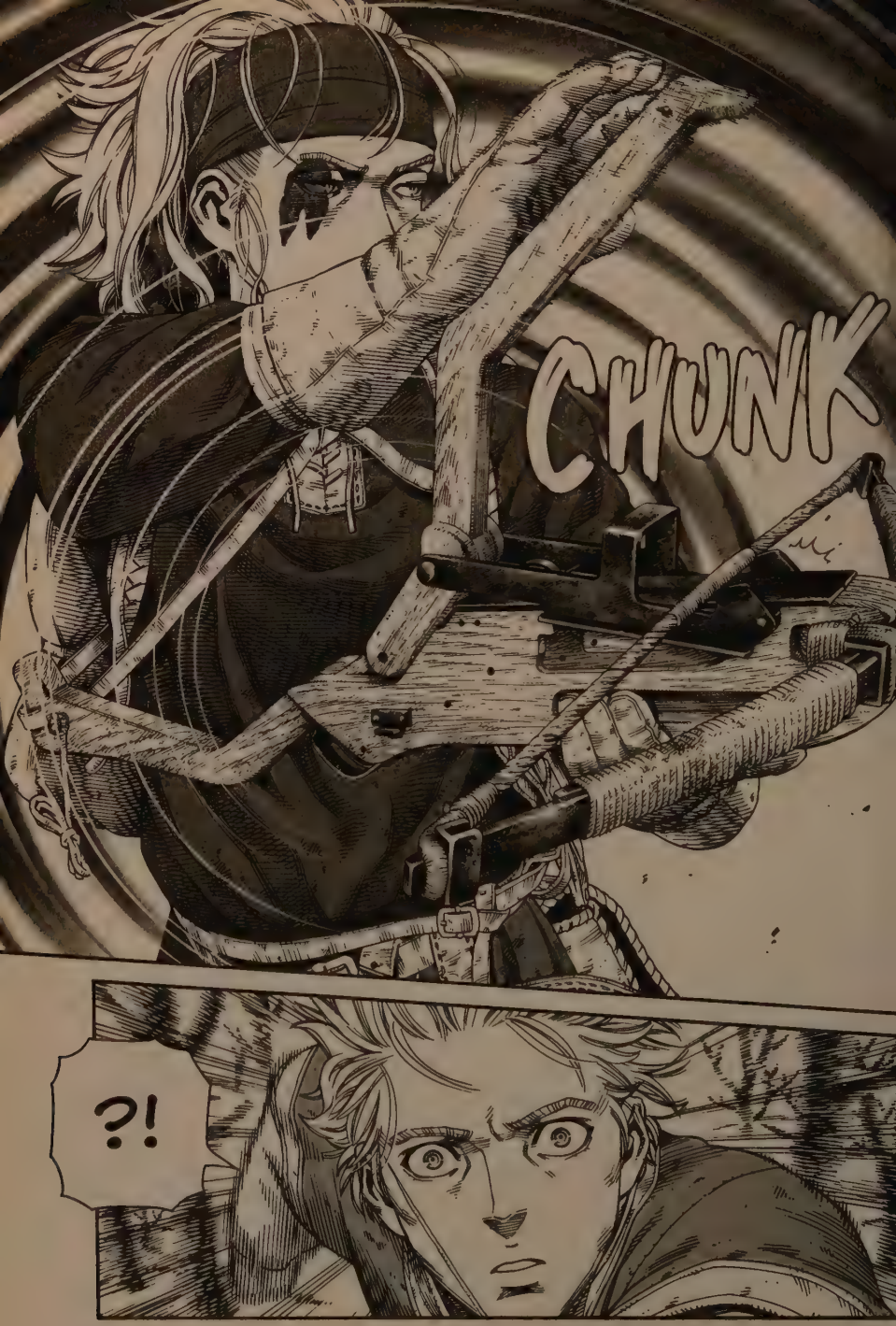
ZSHH

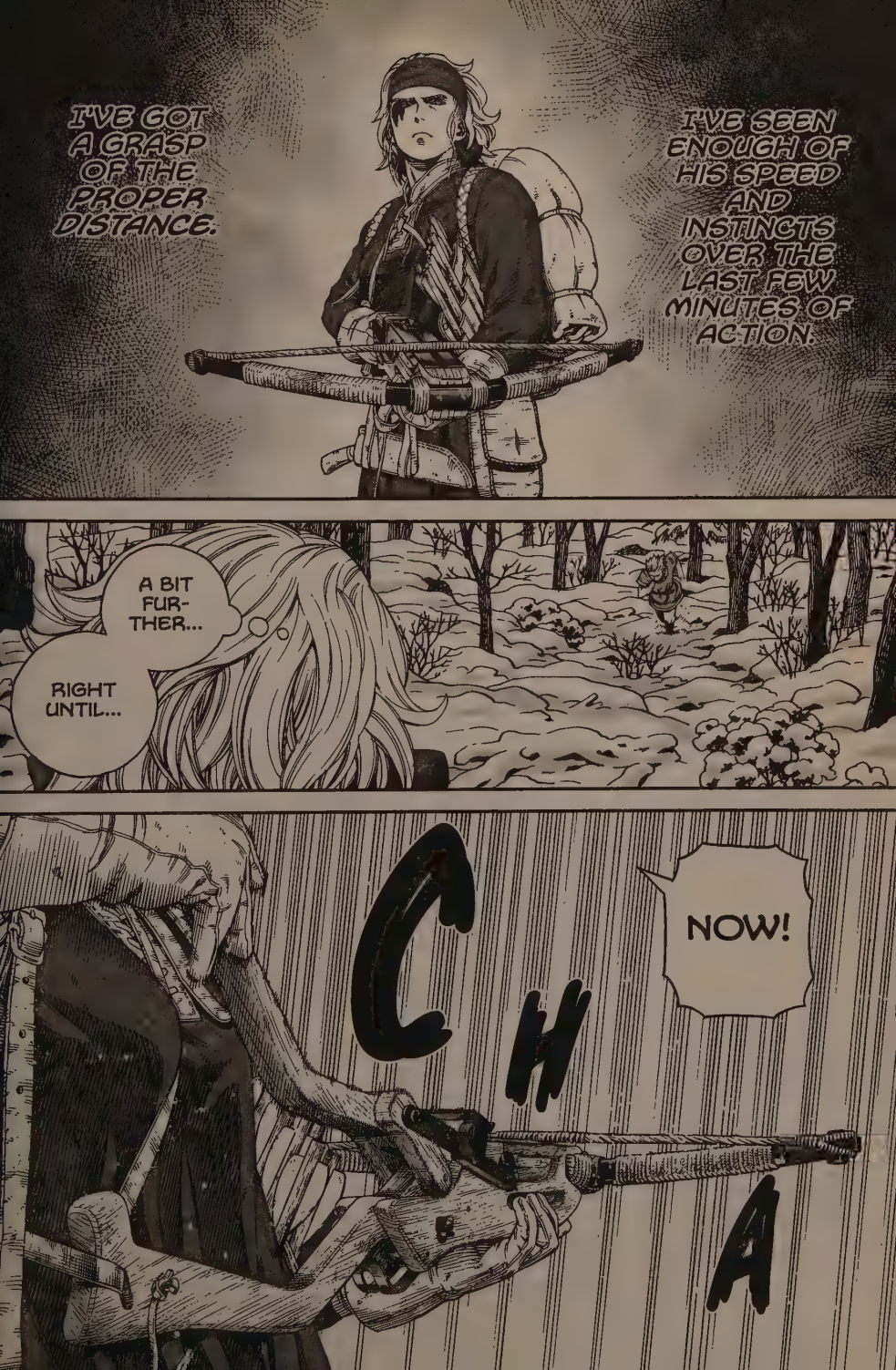
I'VE GOT IT!!
HILD'S OVER THERE!!
DSH

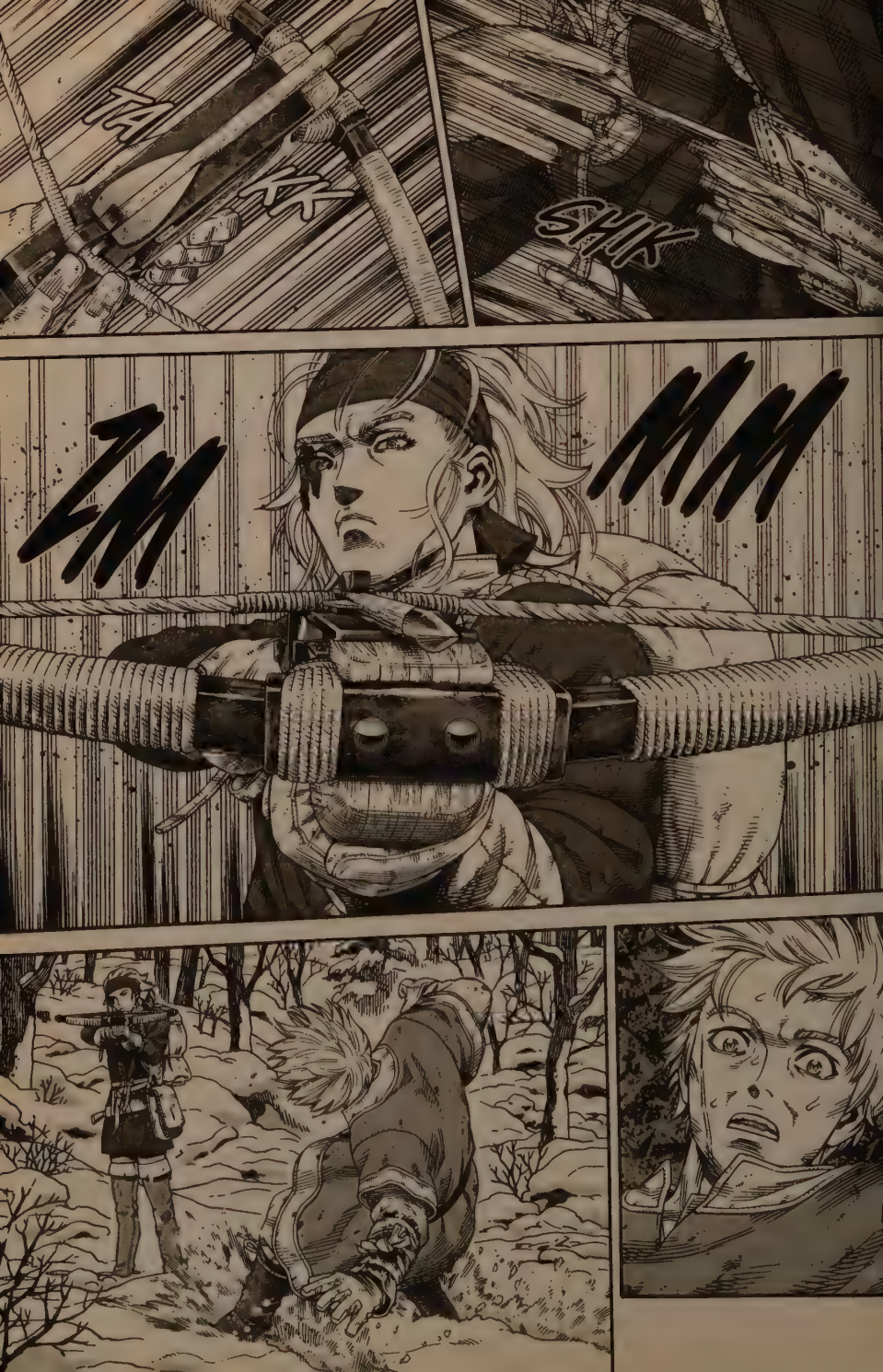

TAAKK

IS SHE GIVING UP AND SWITCHING TO CLOSE COMBAT?
SHE'S NOT RE-LOADING...
?!
I'LL JUST HAVE TO OVER-WHELM HER WITH SPEED!!
A TRAP?!
NO!!
EINAR! OVER THERE!

OF COURSE THORFINN WOULD KNOW.
HE'S COMING STRAIGHT FOR ME.
THAT THE GREATEST WEAKNESS OF THE CROSSBOW...
...IS THE LOADING TIME.
ZSH...
IT SHOULD TAKE HER A WHILE TO LOAD THAT HEAVY WEAPON WITH HER WOMAN'S STRENGTH!
I'VE GOT TO PIN HER DOWN BEFORE SHE CAN PREPARE THE NEXT SHOT!

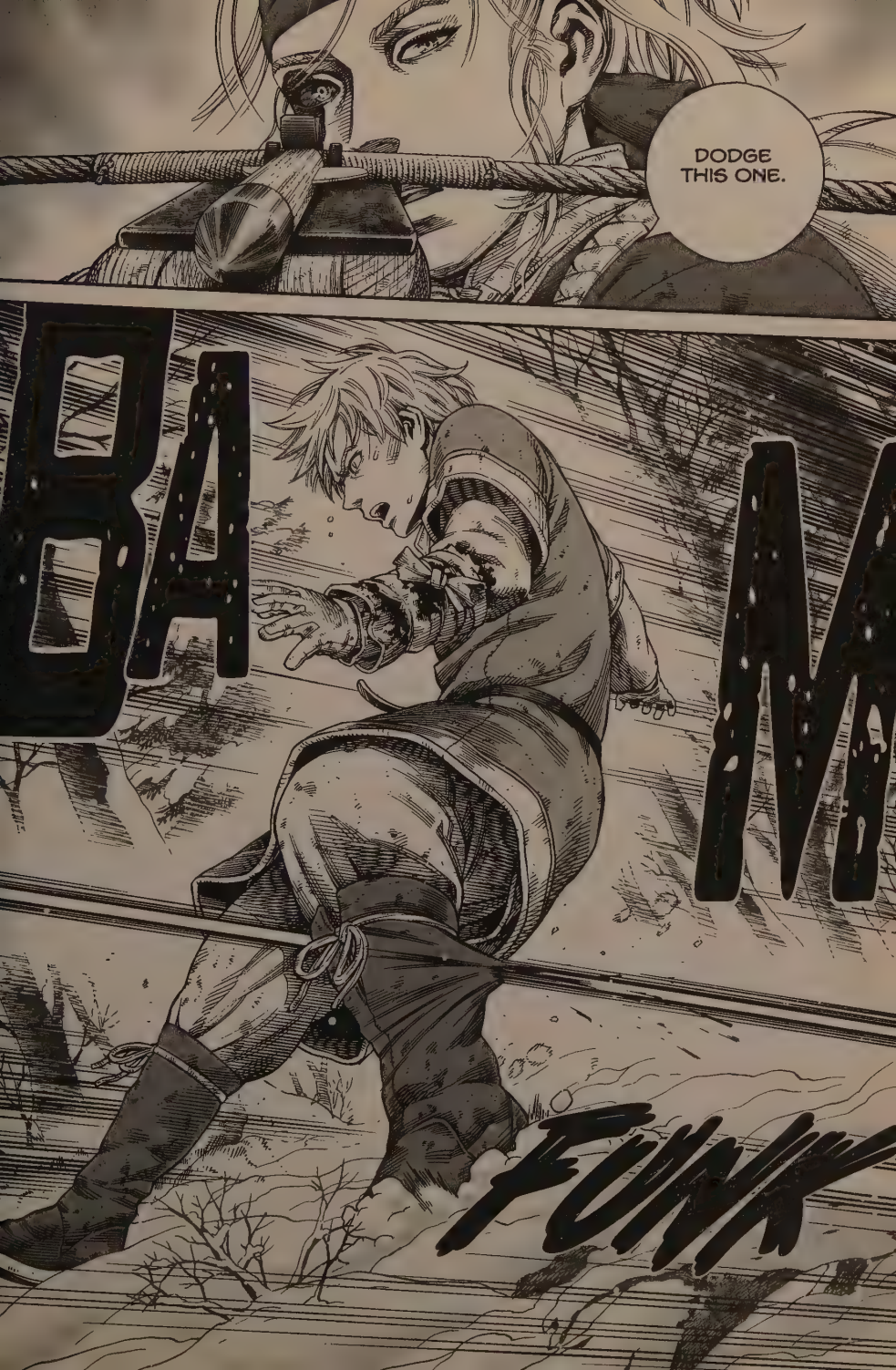

CHUNK
?!

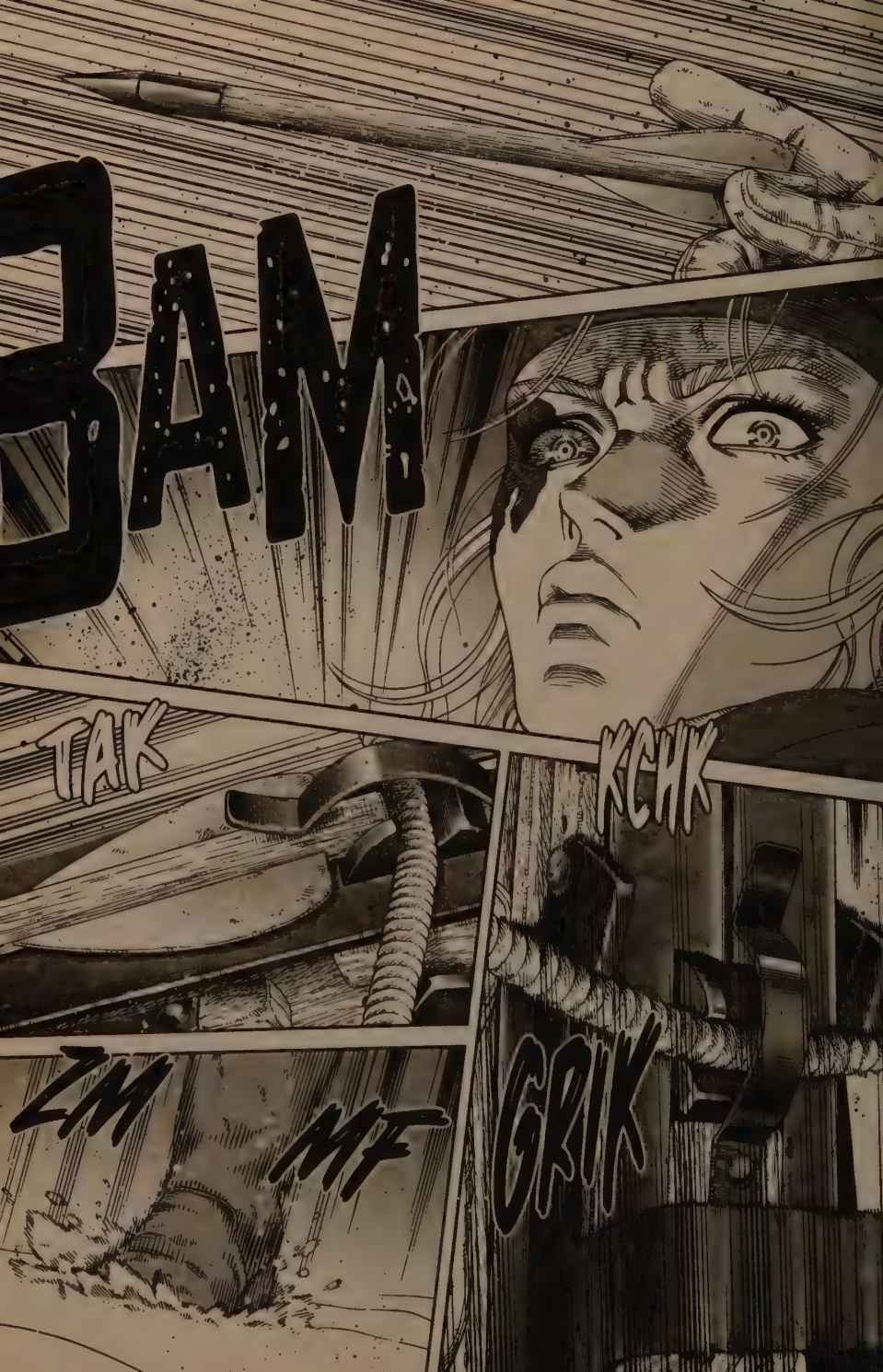

I'VE GOT A GRASP OF THE PROPER DISTANCE.
I'VE SEEN ENOUGH OF HIS SPEED AND INSTINCTS OVER THE LAST FEW MINUTES OF ACTION.
A BIT FUR-THER...
RIGHT UNTIL...
NOW!
CHA

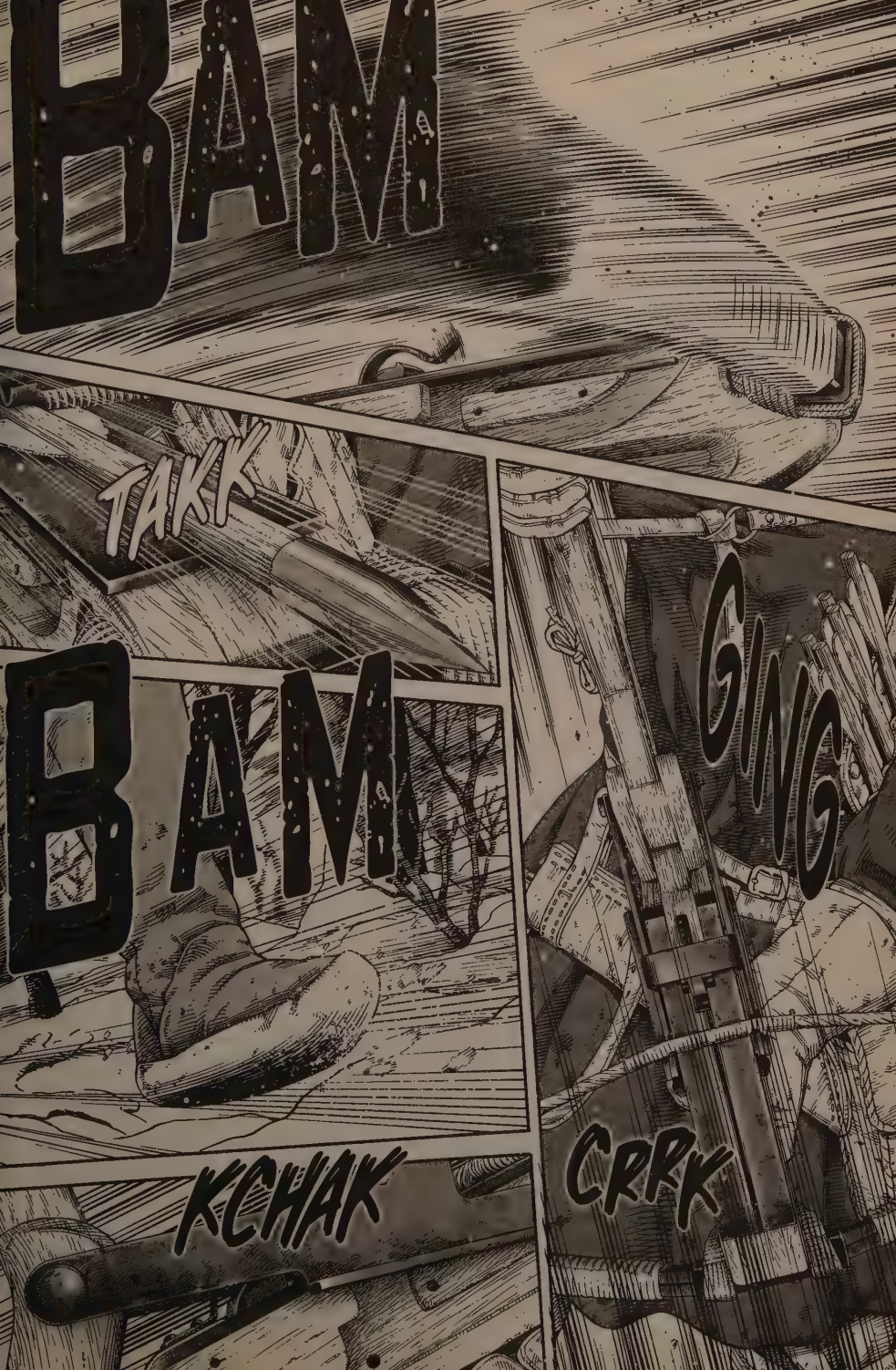

TAK
SHIK
MM
MM

CYBERPUNK

URGH...
KCHUNK
YAAAH!
DMMF


DODGE THIS ONE.
BA
M
FUNK


BAM
TAK
KCHK
ZM
MF
GRIK


BAM
TAKK
BAM
GING
KCHAK
CRRK

HNNG...
IT'S CONQUERED THE CROSS-BOW'S WEAKNESS!!
IT SHOOTS... OVER AND OVER?!
WHAT... IS THAT THING...?
THIS IS...
...A HUNT.

THUD

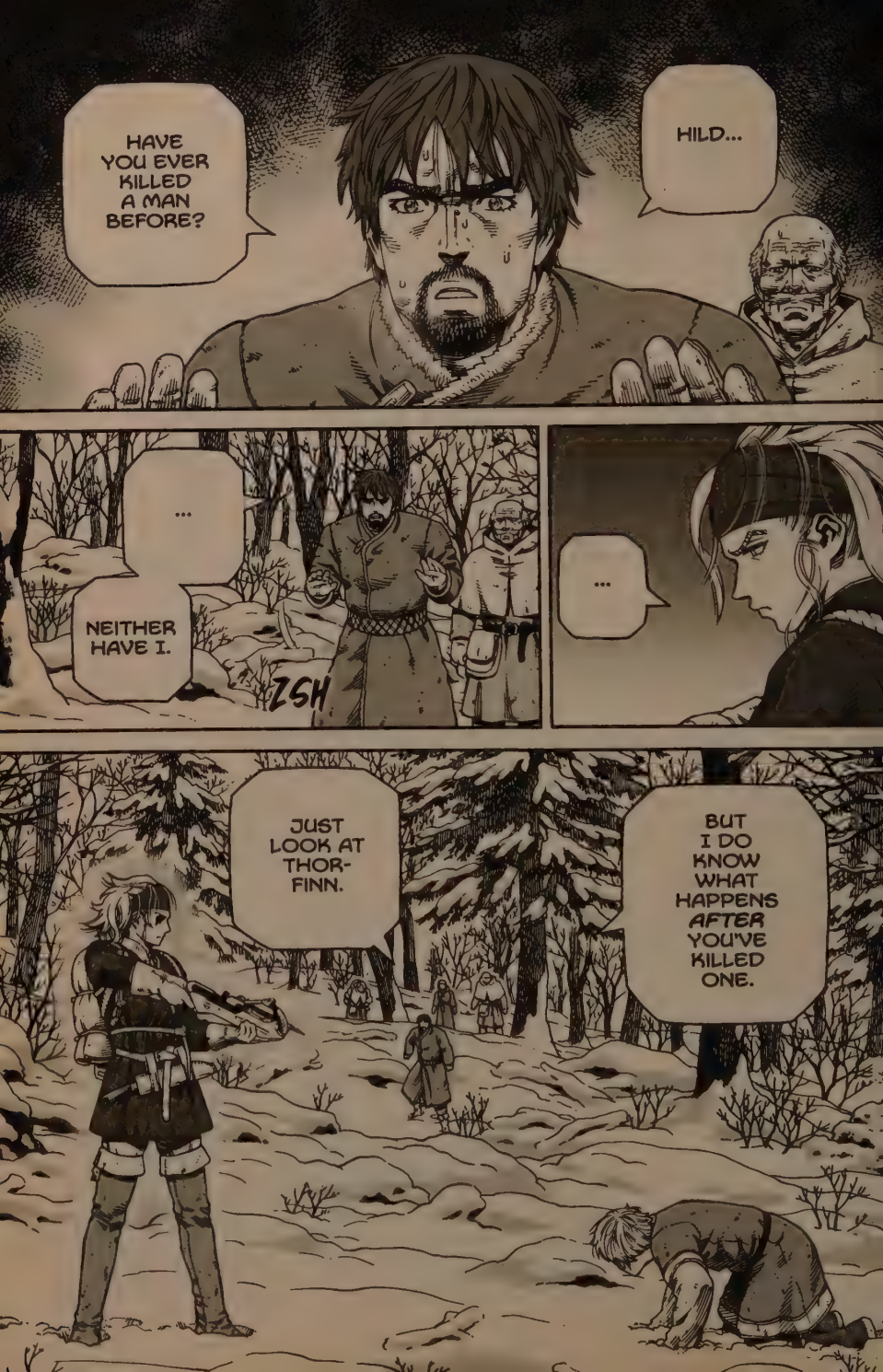
...!!
THOSE WERE THE WORDS YOU SAID TO ME.
DO YOU REMEMBER NOW?
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THE CHANCE TO REPEAT THEM TO YOU.
KRK...

IF YOU WANT TO HATE ANYTHING, HATE YOUR OWN WEAKNESS.
THE STRONG HUNT THE WEAK. IT'S A FACT OF LIFE.
IT'S JUST AS SIMPLE AS THAT.
I AM THE HUNTER...
...AND YOU ARE THE HUNTED.

CAN YOU MOVE?!
DID SHE GET YOUR LEG, THOR-FINN?!
ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE UP EVERYTHING AND DIE HERE, OF ALL PLACES?!
GET UP, THOR-FINN!!
I...
I CAN'T MOVE...
HUFF
HUFF
MY BODY...
...WON'T... MOVE...

WAIT!! HILD, PLEASE WAIT!!
YOU MUSN'T...
...KILL THOR-FINN...!
HUFF
FFH

CHAPTER 122: THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (9)


HAVE YOU EVER KILLED A MAN BEFORE?
HILD...
...
NEITHER HAVE I.
ZSH
...
JUST LOOK AT THOR-FINN.
BUT I DO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS *AFTER* YOU'VE KILLED ONE.

I DEMAND THAT YOU STAY PUT.
IF YOU TRY TO INTER-FERE...
I HAVE THE ABILITY TO DO THAT.
...THEN I AM WILLING TO PUT AN END TO THE REST OF YOU FIRST, BEFORE I TAKE MY TIME WITH THORFINN.
BECAUSE I'M THE ONE WHO NEEDS THE ANTI-DOTE THE MOST, YOU DOLT!!
WHY DID YOU COME ALONG?!

SHWIK

YOU THINK *HIS KIND* REGRET KILLING OTHERS? DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH.

STOP RIGHT THERE, OGRE.

I'D FEEL MORE HESITATION SHOOTING A BEAR.

THEY ARE SCUM, LOWER THAN BEASTS.

THEY DO NOT HAVE HUMAN FEELINGS.

I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM WAKE UP FEELING PLEASED AND REFRESHED.

IN HIS DREAMS EVERY NIGHT...

...HE IS PLAGUED BY THE GHOSTS OF THOSE HE HAS KILLED.

COME NO CLOSER.

YOU *WILL* REGRET KILLING A PERSON.

SHUK

SHK

IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HATRED AND VENGEANCE.

STOP, EINAR!! KEEP YOUR DISTANCE!!

THORFINN'S BEEN LOOKING AFTER THIS CHILD BETTER THAN ANY OF US, AND IT'S NOT EVEN HIS!

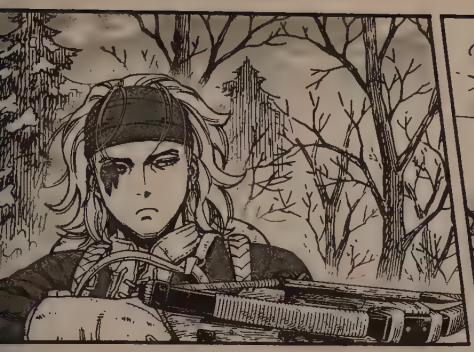
I KNOW THAT ALL MEN LOVE TO FLEX THEIR MUSCLES AND SHOW OFF HOW STRONG THEY ARE...

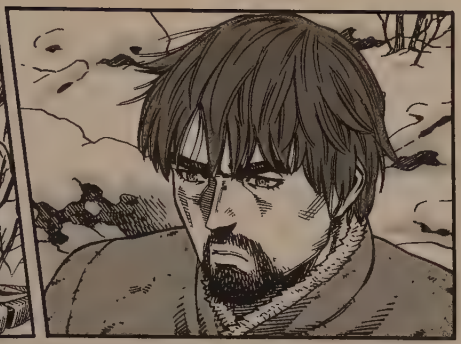
...BUT THORFINN IS DIFFERENT! HE'S KIND!

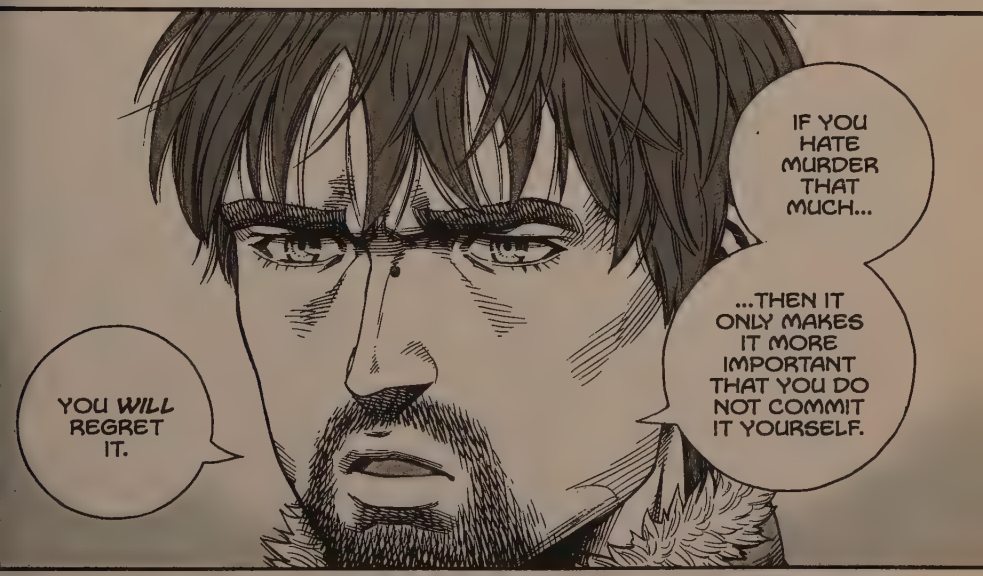
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE DID IN HIS PAST...BUT HE'S A GOOD GUY NOW.

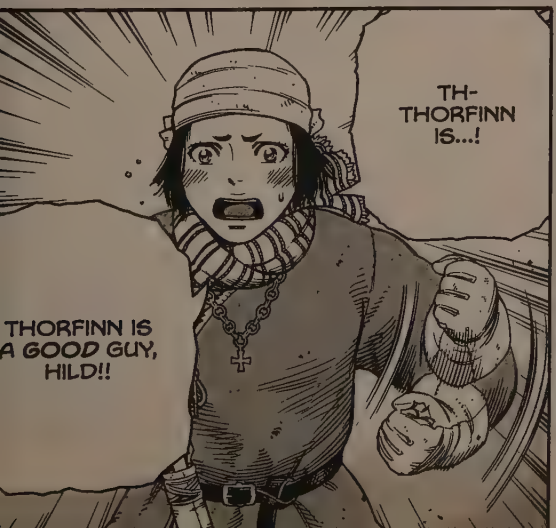
I'D NEVER SEEN A MAN CHANGE A DIAPER BEFORE HIM.

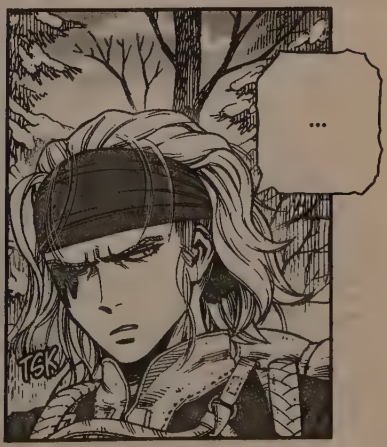
OOWAAAH!



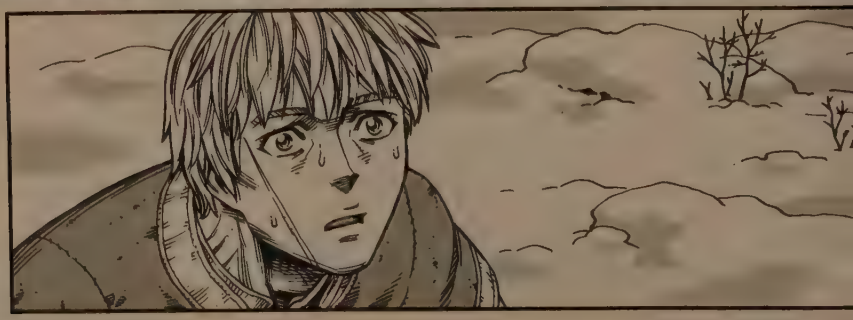



IF YOU HATE MURDER THAT MUCH...
...THEN IT ONLY MAKES IT MORE IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO NOT COMMIT IT YOURSELF.
YOU *WILL* REGRET IT.

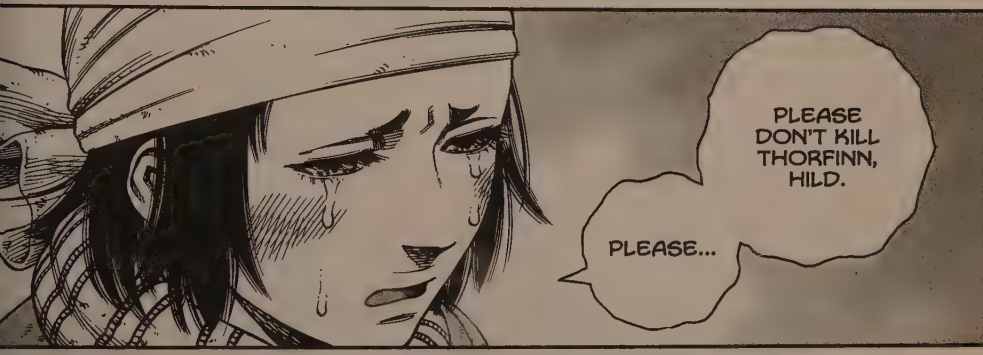

TH-THORFINN IS...!
THORFINN IS A *GOOD* GUY, HILD!!

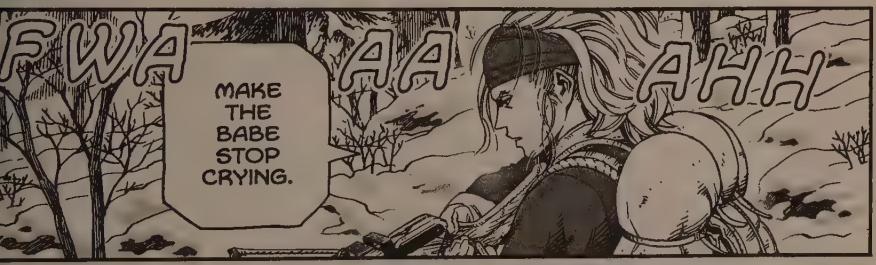

...
TSK

MAKE THE BABE STOP CRY-ING!!

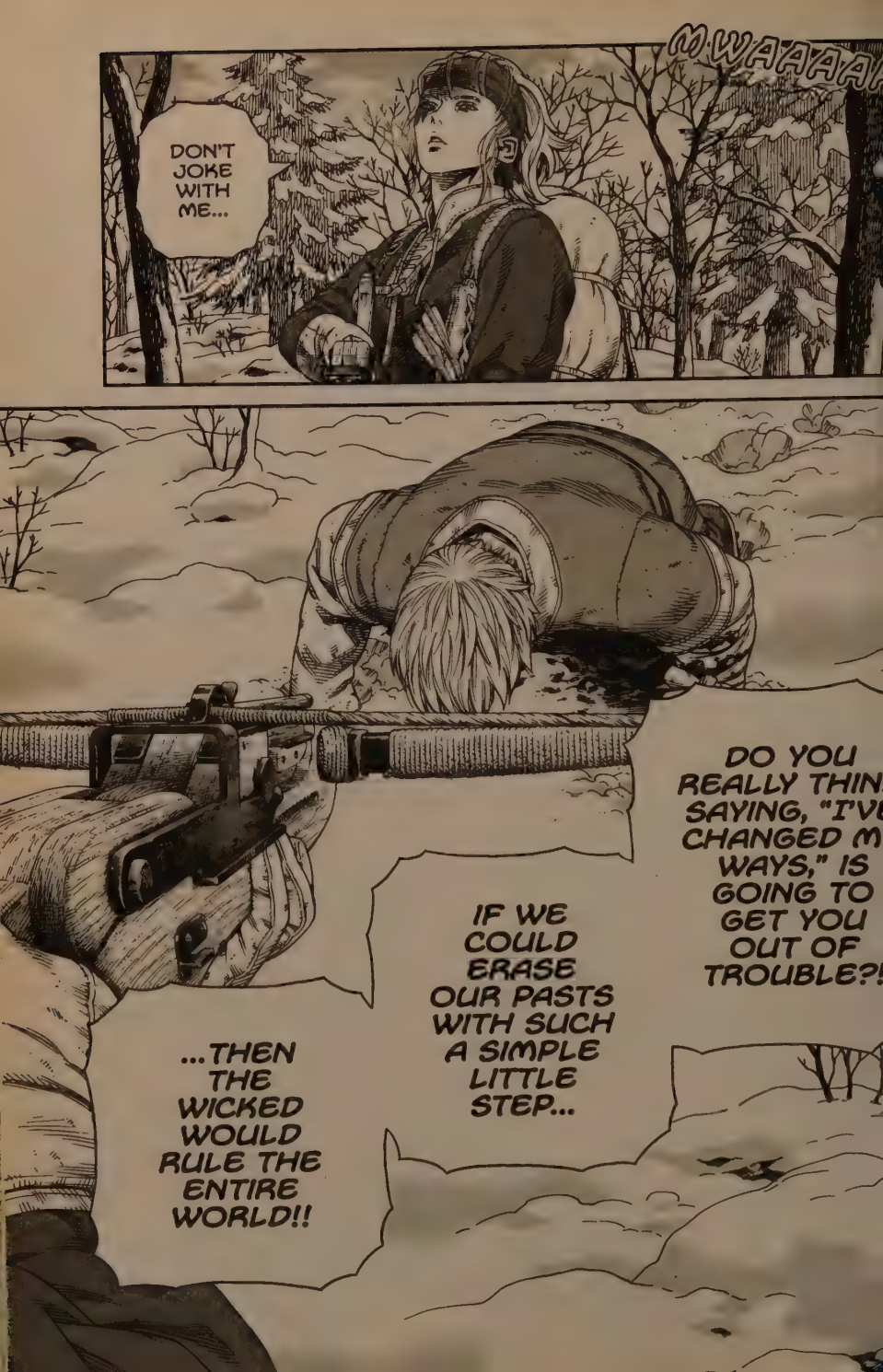


HNGYAAAAA
THERE... SEE?
KARLI DOESN'T WANT YOU TO KILL HIM.


PLEASE DON'T KILL THORFINN, HILD.
PLEASE...


FWA
AA
AHH
MAKE THE BABE STOP CRYING.

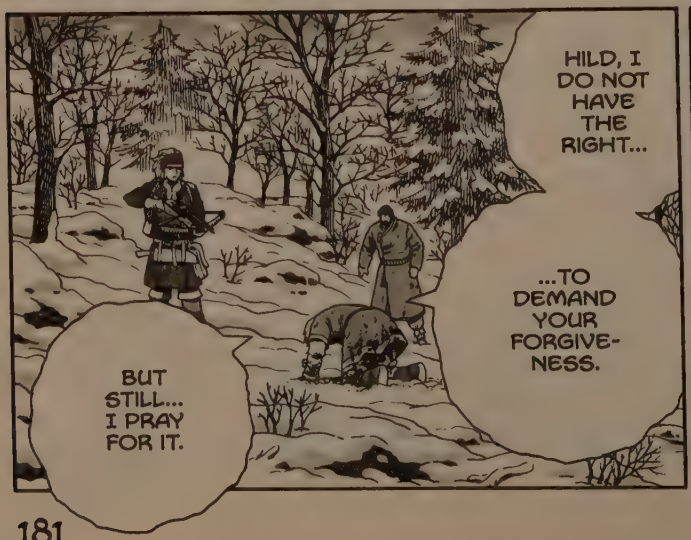
KILLING THORFINN WON'T MAKE YOUR FAMILY COME BACK!
HILD!

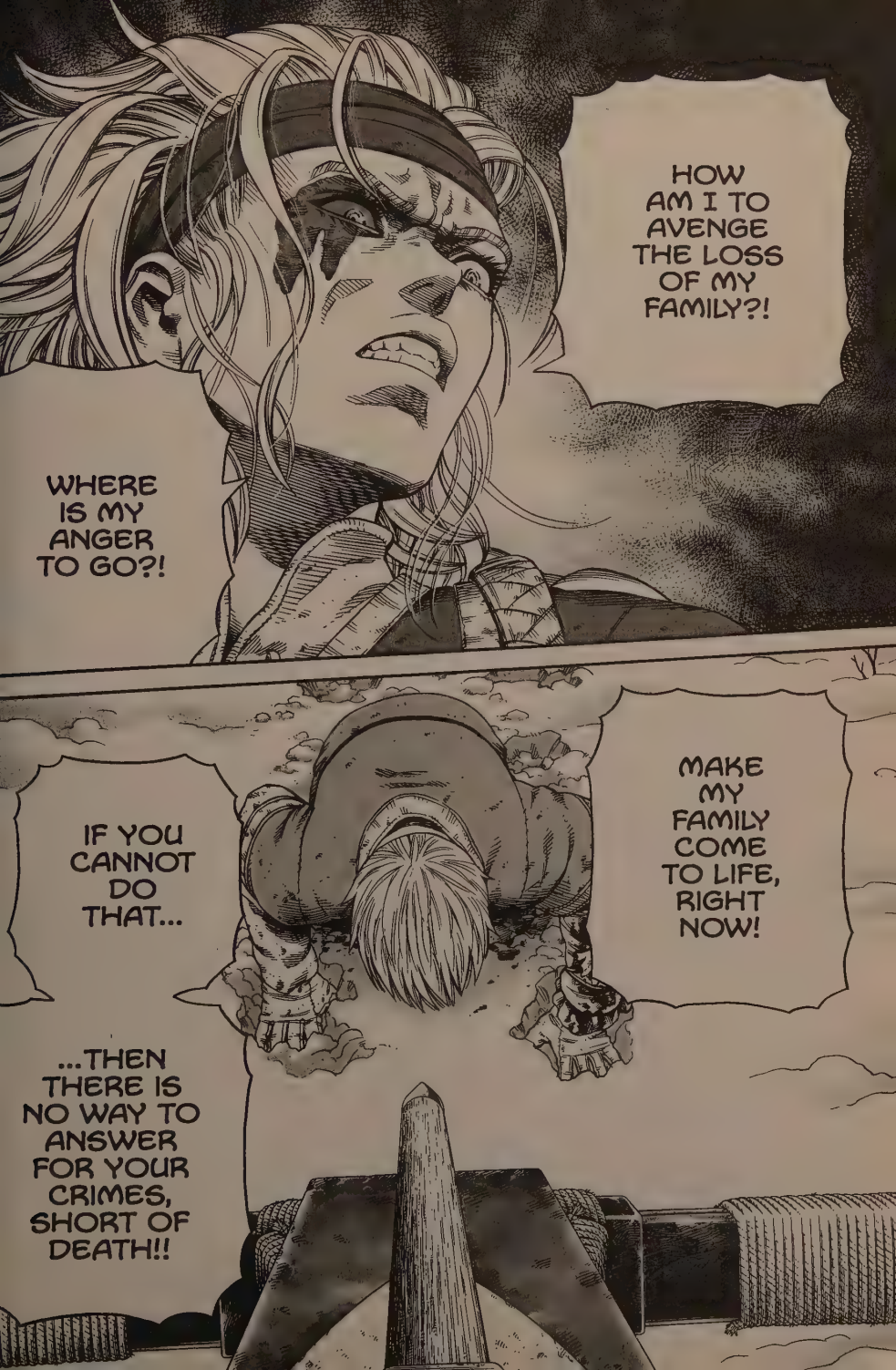

MWAAAAA
DON'T JOKE WITH ME...
DO YOU REALLY THIN SAYING, "I'V CHANGED M WAYS," IS GOING TO GET YOU OUT OF TROUBLE?!
IF WE COULD ERASE OUR PASTS WITH SUCH A SIMPLE LITTLE STEP...
...THEN THE WICKED WOULD RULE THE ENTIRE WORLD!!

HGWAAAAAHH
HE WON'T STOP UNTIL HE GETS THE ANTI-DOTE!!
H-HE'S CRYING BECAUSE THE POISON IS START-ING TO ANGUISH HIM!
MWA AAAHH
SHUF
VWUM
IT FELL INTO THE SNOW!!
HEY, WHY'D YOU CHUCK IT ALL THE WAY OVER THERE, YOU IDIOT?!

EINAR.
HE'S TRYING! HE'S TRYING TO ATONE THROUGH LIFE...
STOP IT! PLEASE!!

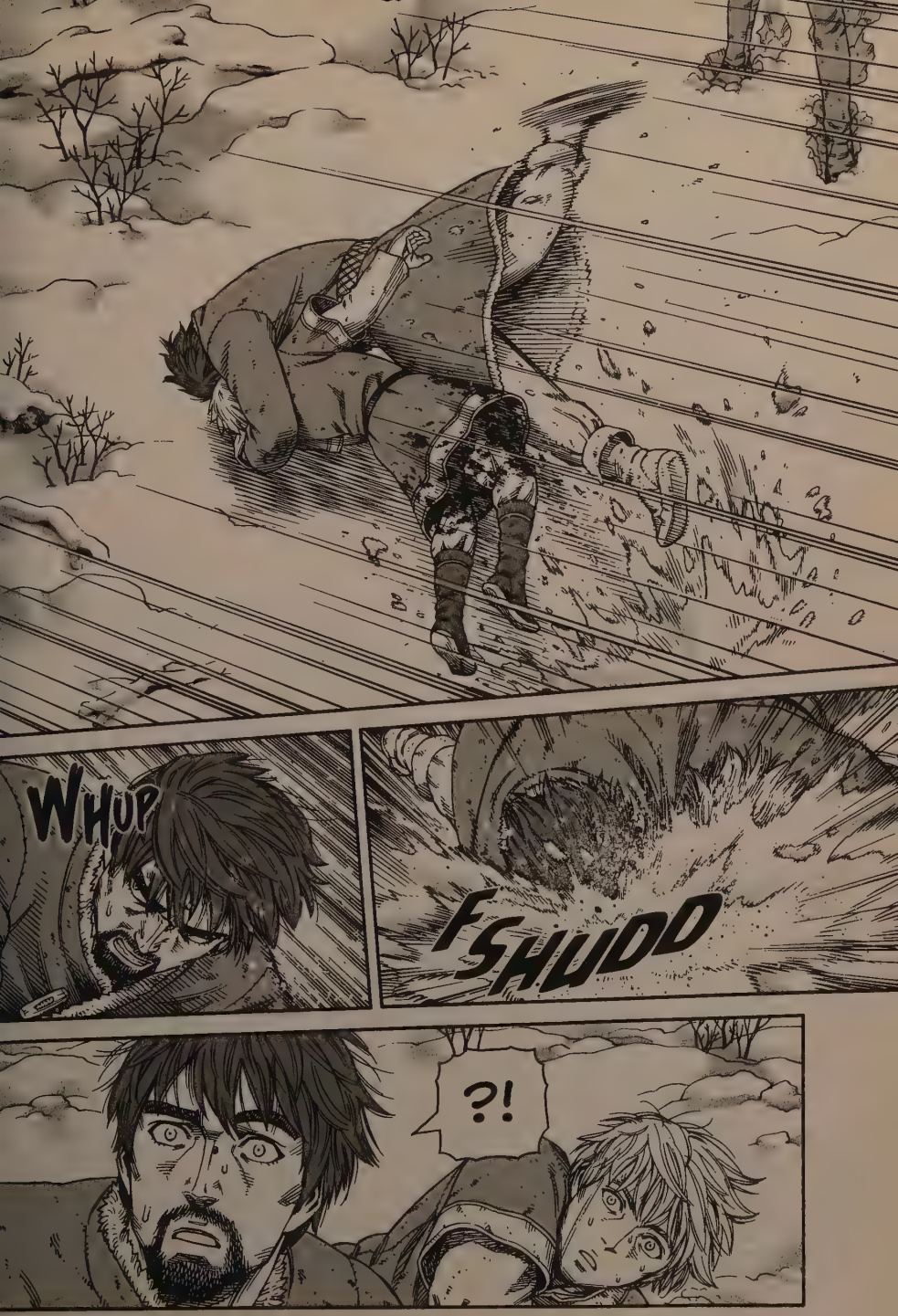
I HAVE TO SAY IT ON MY OWN.
THANK YOU, BUT I'LL SPEAK FOR MYSELF.

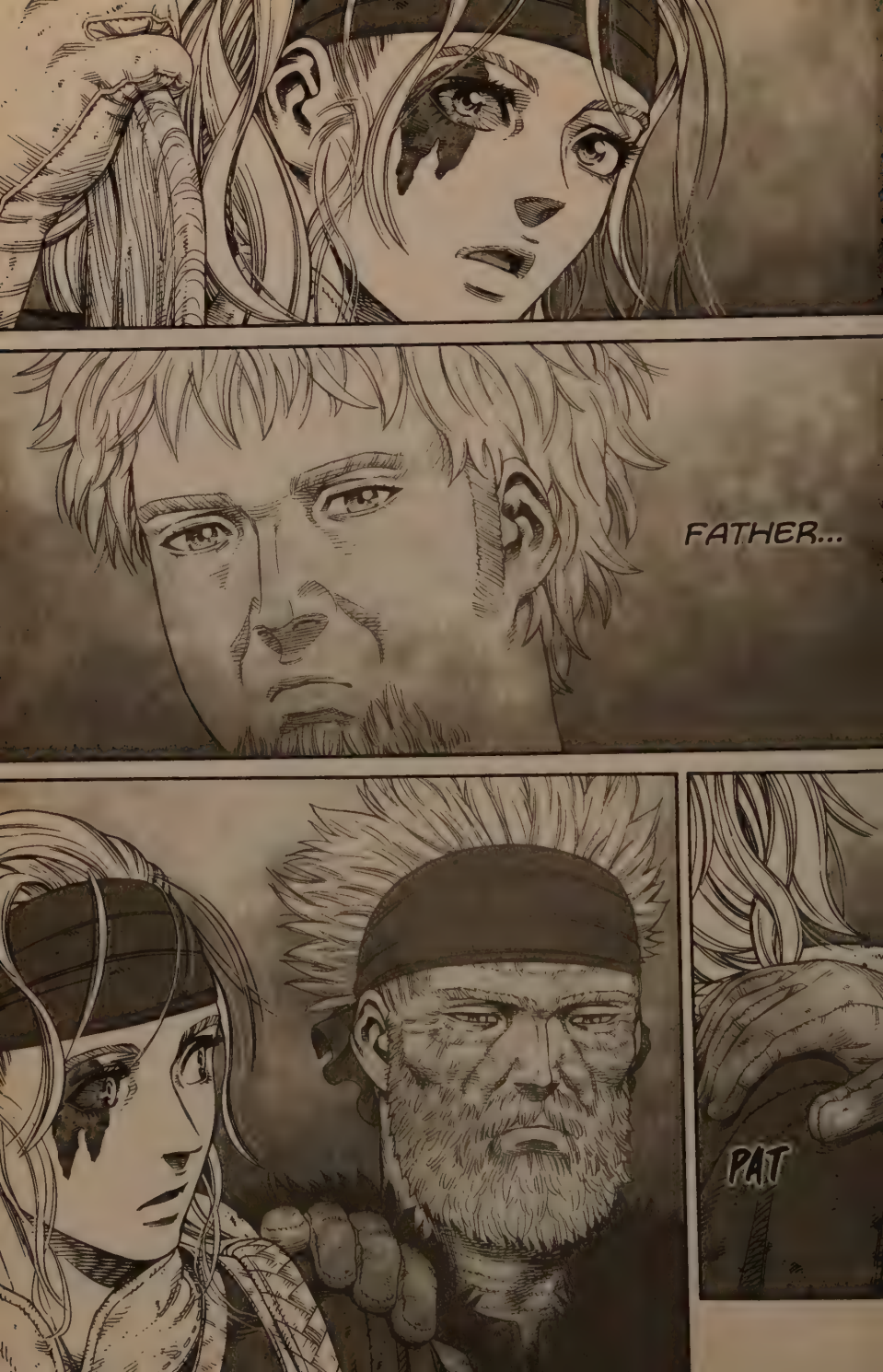

HILD, I DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT...
...TO DEMAND YOUR FORGIVE-NESS.
BUT STILL... I PRAY FOR IT.


HOW AM I TO AVENGE THE LOSS OF MY FAMILY?!
WHERE IS MY ANGER TO GO?!
MAKE MY FAMILY COME TO LIFE, RIGHT NOW!
IF YOU CANNOT DO THAT...
...THEN THERE IS NO WAY TO ANSWER FOR YOUR CRIMES, SHORT OF DEATH!!

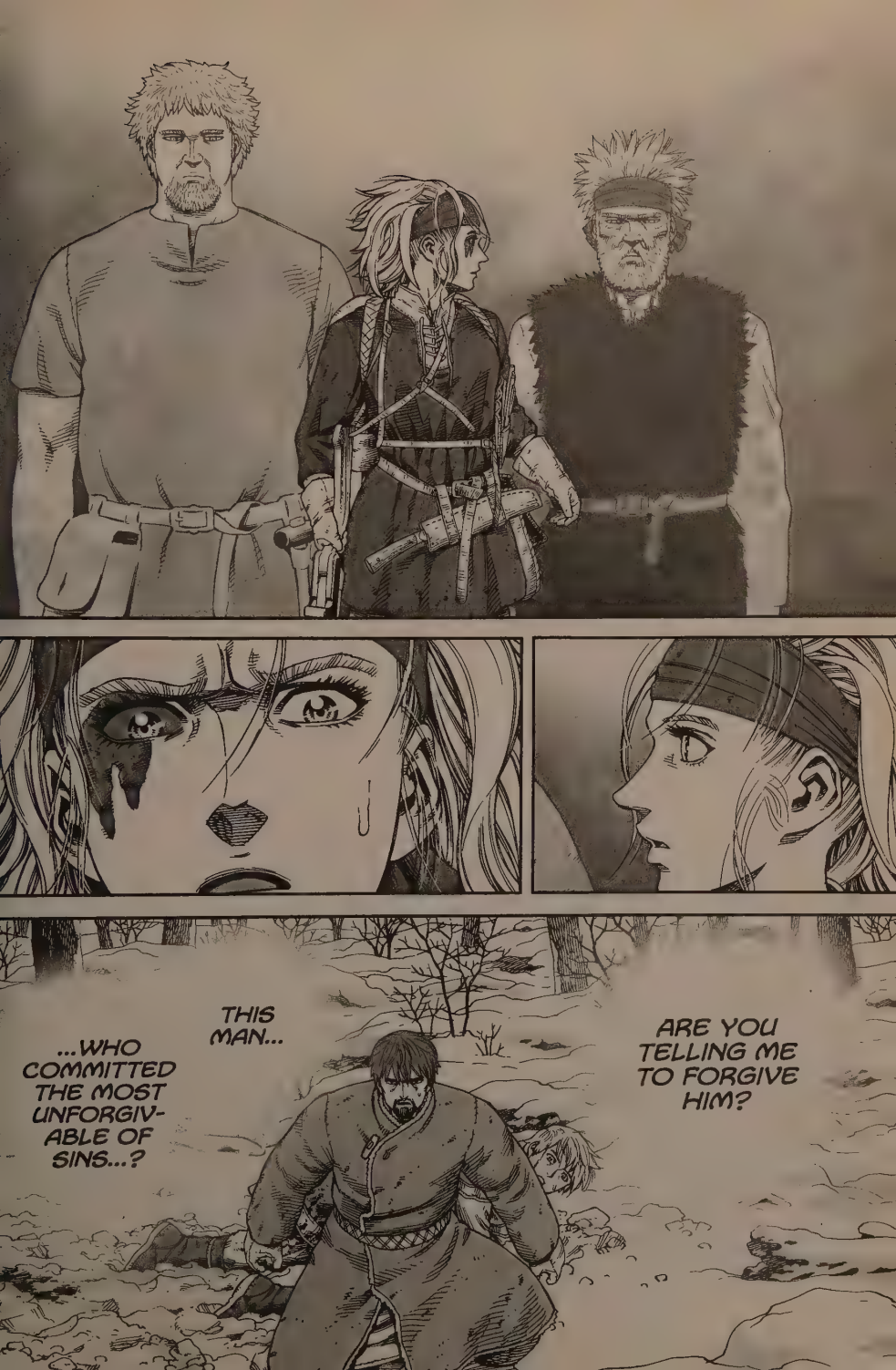
WE'RE DONE HERE!!
SHUT YOUR MOUTH!!
!!
DASH
NOW PAY!!
KRK
RIGHT HERE AND NOW!!
BAM

GIVE ME TIME TO LIVE SO THAT I MAY ATONE!!
PLEASE, GIVE ME TIME!!
SILENCE. NO MORE TALKING.
ONCE I HAVE ATONED, THEN I WILL RETURN!
PLEASE! I ONLY NEED A FEW YEARS!!
I WILL COME BACK TO YOU, SO THAT YOU MAY KILL ME!


WHUP
FSHUDD
?!


FATHER...
PAT

...?
HOW DO YOU INTEND TO ATONE?
...


...WHO COMMITTED THE MOST UNFORGIV-ABLE OF SINS...?
THIS MAN...
ARE YOU TELLING ME TO FORGIVE HIM?

AND YOU THINK THAT WILL ATONE FOR OUR LOSS?
...THAT IS PREPOS-TEROUS.
IT'S NOT GOING TO BRING MY FAMILY BACK TO LIFE.
...
TRY IT.

I WILL CREATE... A NATION.
A LAND OF PEACE.
...!
I WILL BUILD A GREATER PEACE EVEN THAN THE ONES I DESTROYED...
IN A NEW, UNCULTIVATED LAND...CALLED VINLAND.
...WHERE I WILL HELP RAISE MORE LIVES THAN THE NUMBER I ENDED.

FROM TODAY ONWARD, I AM WATCHING YOU.

THE MOMENT I FEEL THAT YOU ARE NOTHING BUT TALK...

...I WILL PLACE A CROSSBOW BOLT IN YOUR SKULL! UNDERSTOOD?!

TH... THANK YOU!

I PROMISE ...!!

I... PROM...

FUMP

THORFINN!!

IF THIS ANGER AND HATRED...

...ARE GOING TO BE EASED BY THIS LAND OF PEACE YOU PRO-POSE...

...THEN *DO IT.*

I DEFEATED YOU. YOUR LIFE IS MINE.

I WILL ALLOW YOU TO KEEP IT, FOR A BRIEF TIME.

VINLAND SAGA MAP

THORFINN'S TRAVELS

CALM FJORD

A land south of Bergen where Hild grew up with her father, Hrafnkell. Eight years ago, Thorfinn raided this place with Askeladd's band and killed Hrafnkell. Hild fell down a canyon and survived the attack.

HILD

HRAFNKELL

Greenland

Arctic Circle

Iceland

Sea of Norway

Norway

Sweden

Bergen

Faroes

Shetland

Jelling

Denmark

North Sea

Brattahlid

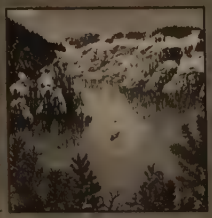
York

England

London

Atlantic Ocean

France



SOUTH OF BERGEN

Thorfinn's band stops here on the way through Europe on their trading trip from Iceland to far-off Greece. A bear attacked Thorfinn as soon as they disembarked, and it was the hunter named Hild who saved them.

THORFINN

EINAR

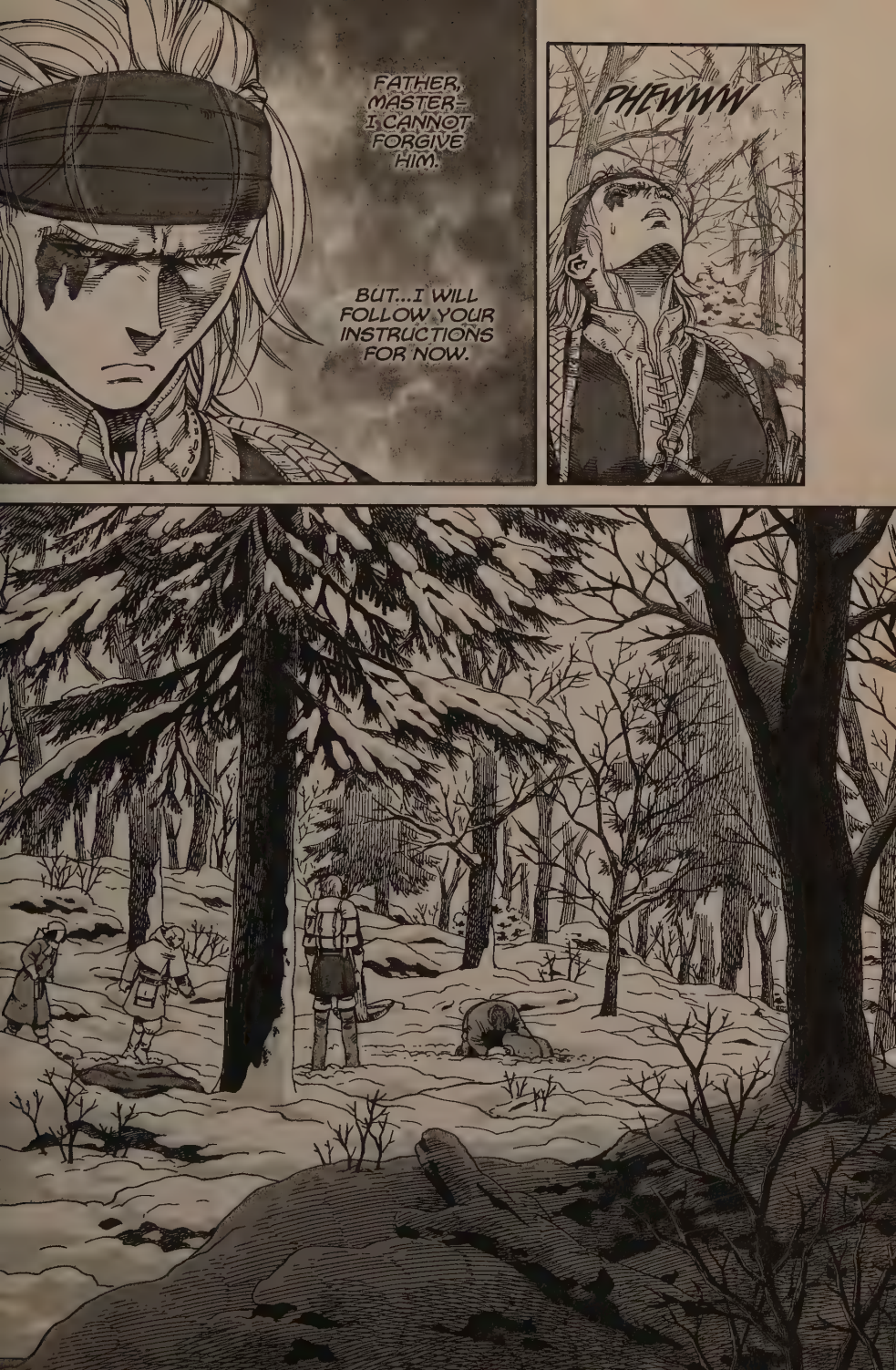
BUG-EYED THORFINN

LEIF

GUDRID

KARLI

DOG


FATHER, MASTER– I CANNOT FORGIVE HIM.
BUT...I WILL FOLLOW YOUR INSTRUCTIONS FOR NOW.
PHEWWW

I love the children's book series, *Vicke Viking*. In them, there's a circular saw that cuts lumber using the power of a water wheel, invented by the young Vicke, the protagonist. That story came in very handy for this volume. Swedish author Runer Jonsson's *Vicke Viking* was turned into a hit animated show in Japan, which many of my countrymen would recognize. It tells the story of Vicke, a Viking-era boy, who is rather timid, despite being the only son of the mighty Chief Halvar. Vicke loves peace and detests violence, and is very clever, often devising new ideas and inventions to get people out of trouble. Whenever he makes a new discovery, Vicke says, "Truly important discoveries should never be kept to oneself. Nothing good will come of hiding it. And if you share your knowledge with others, they will do the same to you. Things will be better for everyone!"

What a sharp kid! He's always ready to help out anyone, even foes of his father, Halvar. It's Vicke's most wonderful quality. I love the simple and pure-hearted vision of a protagonist, and of humanity, that exists throughout the *Vicke Viking* series. It makes me wish real-life could be that way. There's no need to assume that a Viking must bravely sail and pillage to be a Viking. Real, just truths do not always align with cultural assumptions. I try never to forget that.

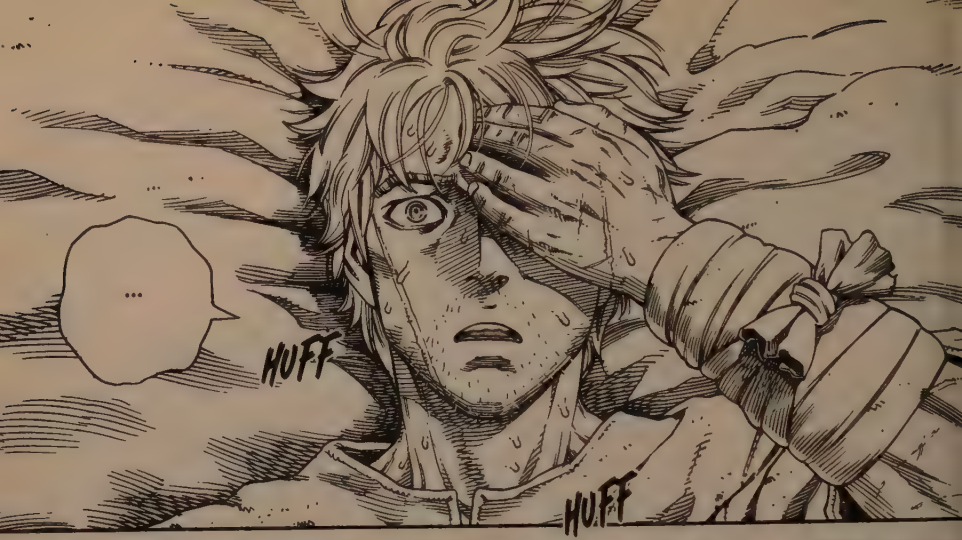
MAKOTO YUKIMURA

VINLAND SAGA

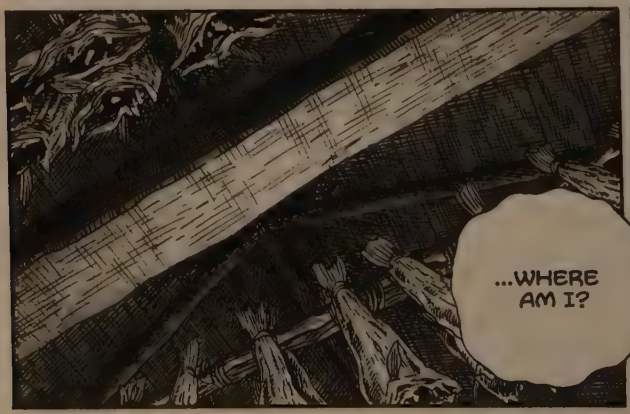
ヴィンランド・サガ

VINLAND SAGA

PLEASE...
THOR-FINN.
PLEASE, JUST...
JUST A FEW YEARS' TIME...
THOR-FINN.
PLEASE, GIVE ME TIME...

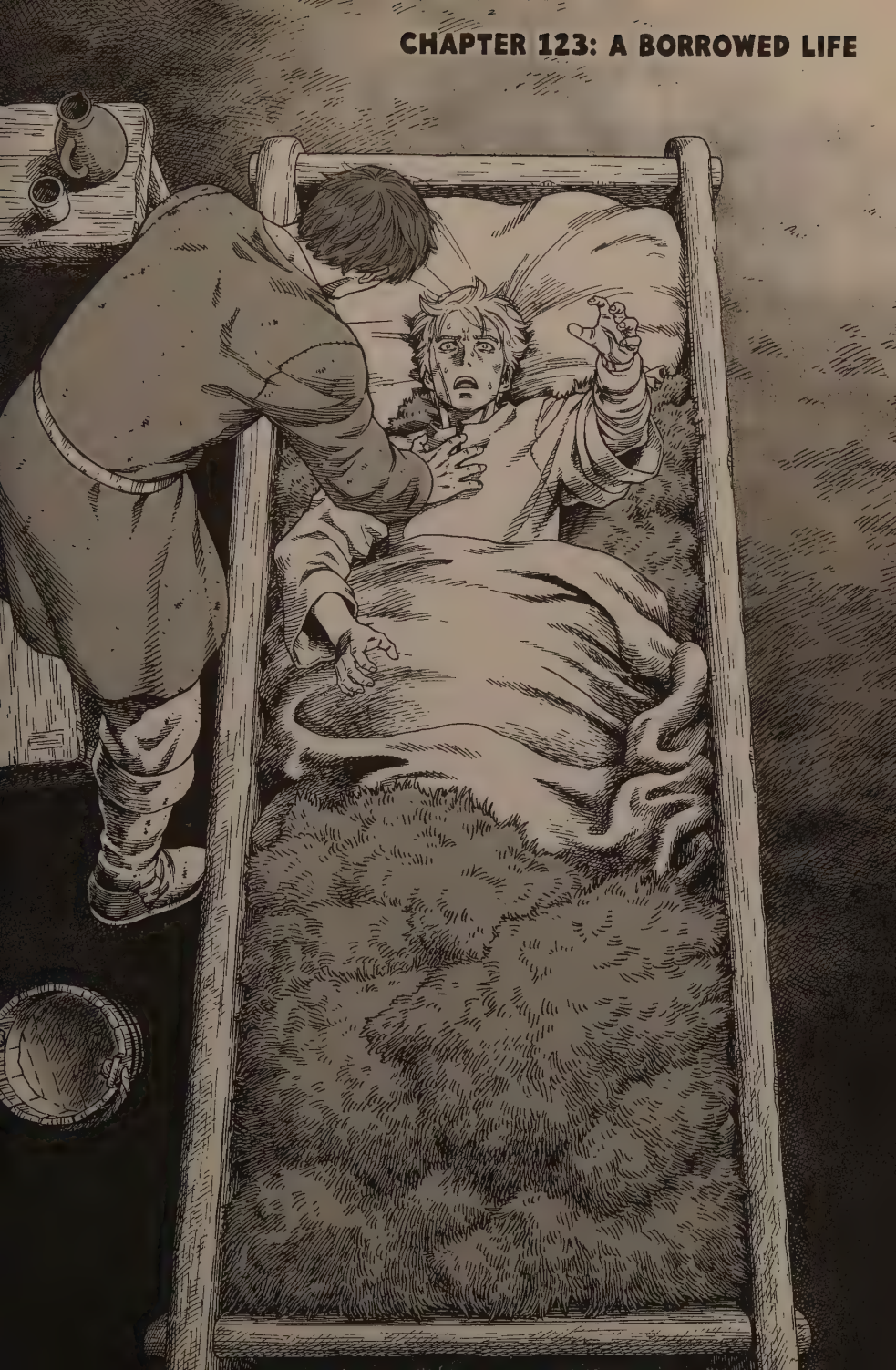

...
HUFF
HUFF

YOU'RE AWAKE?
IT'S BEEN AN ENTIRE DAY SINCE WE MET HILD.
IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.



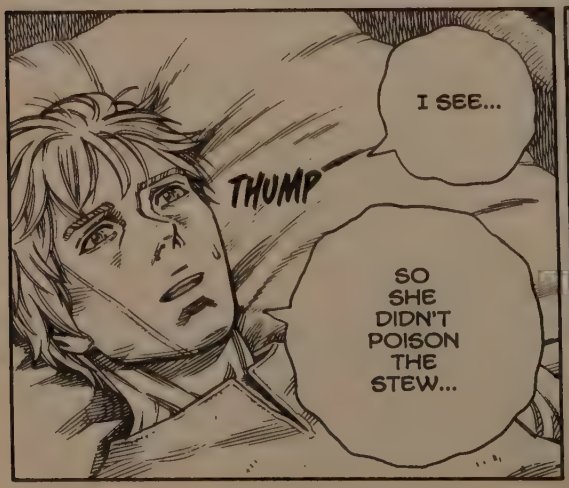
...WHERE AM I?

CHAPTER 123: A BORROWED LIFE



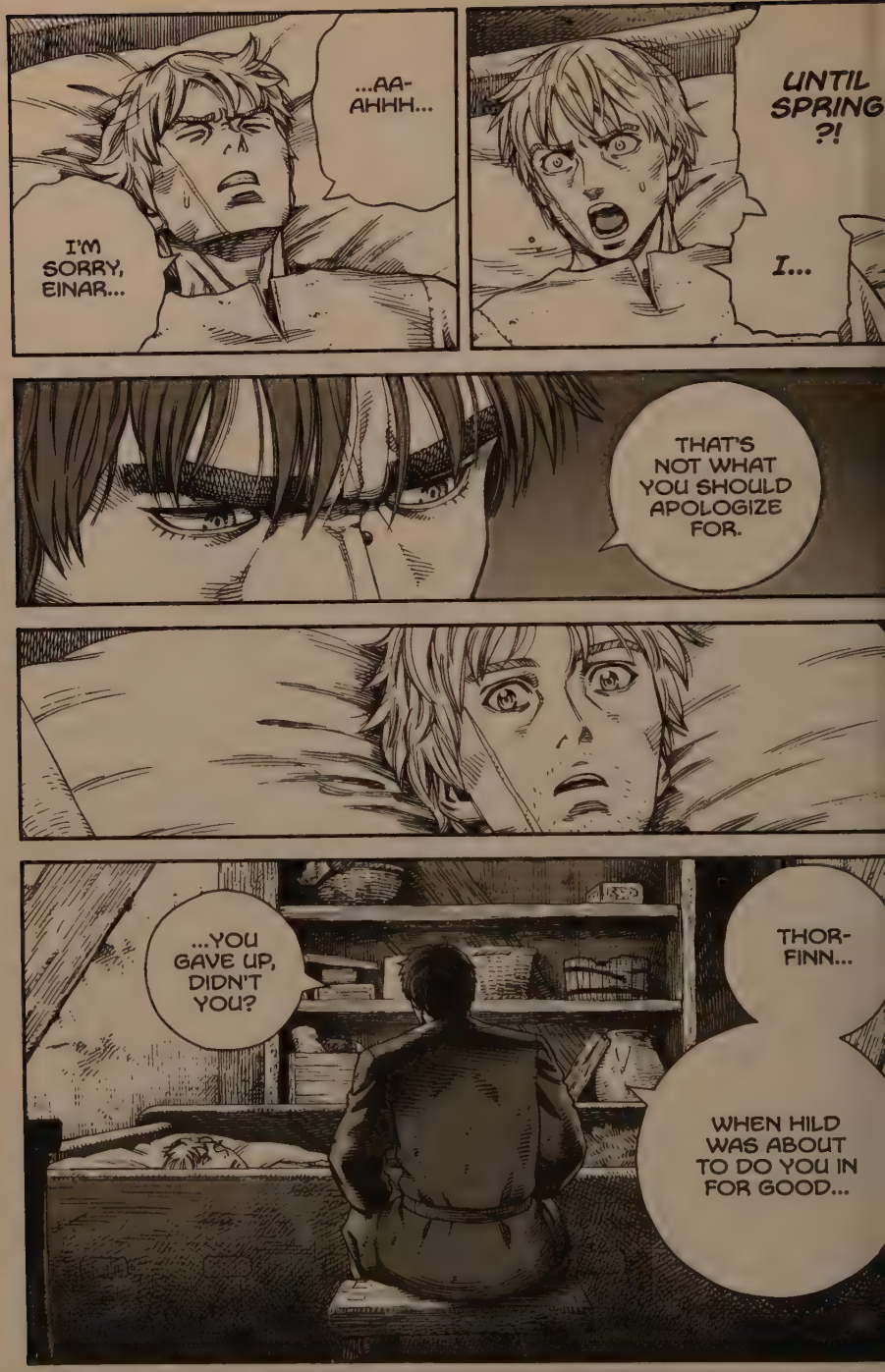
IT WAS ALL A BLUFF, LIKE I SUSPECTED.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. THERE WAS NO POISON TO BEGIN WITH.

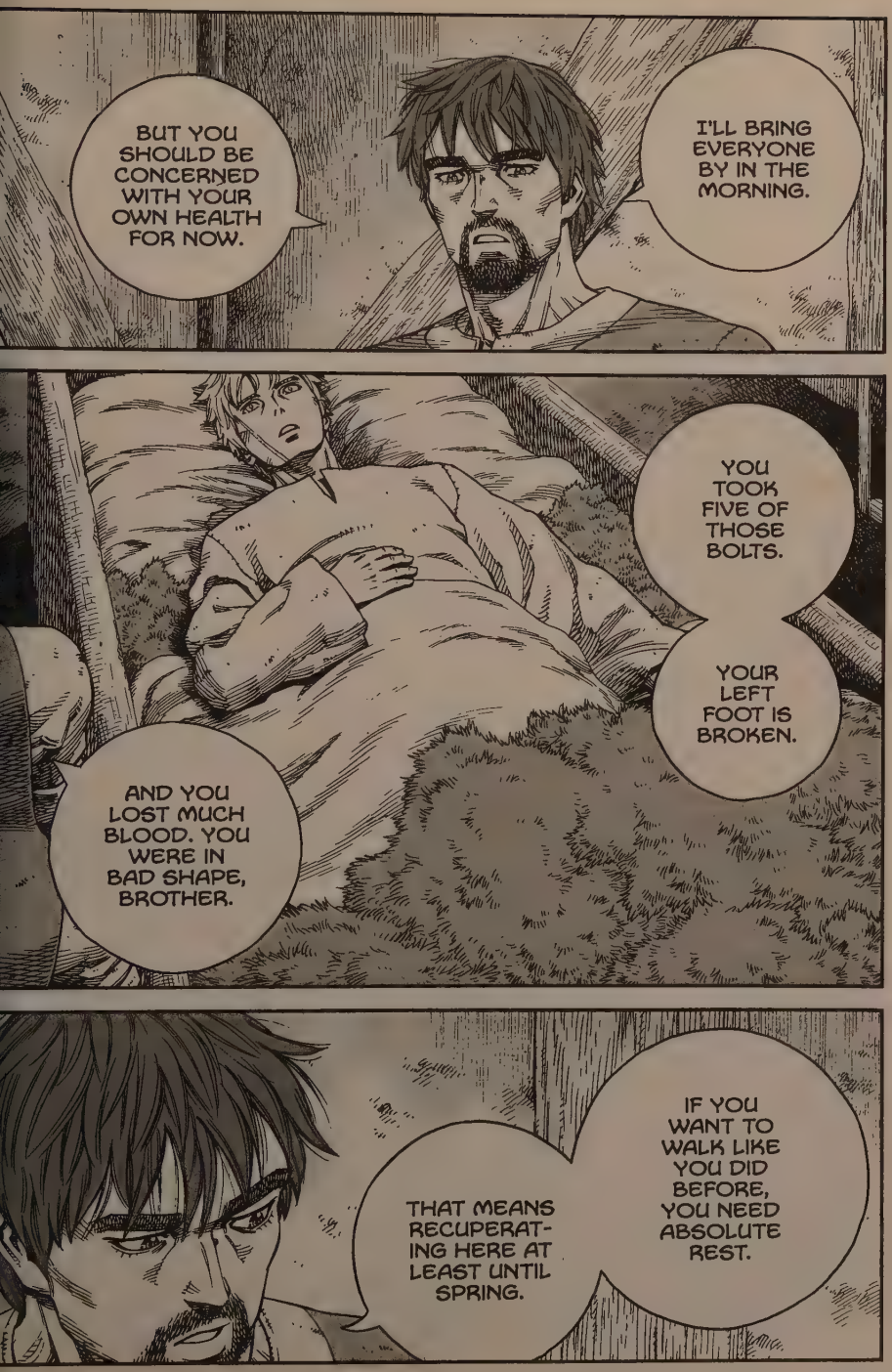
SALTY...
??
?
WHEN BUG-EYES DUG THE JAR OUT OF THE SNOW, IT WAS FILLED WITH PLAIN OLD SALT.


THUMP
I SEE...
SO SHE DIDN'T POISON THE STEW...

...
A BLUFF...

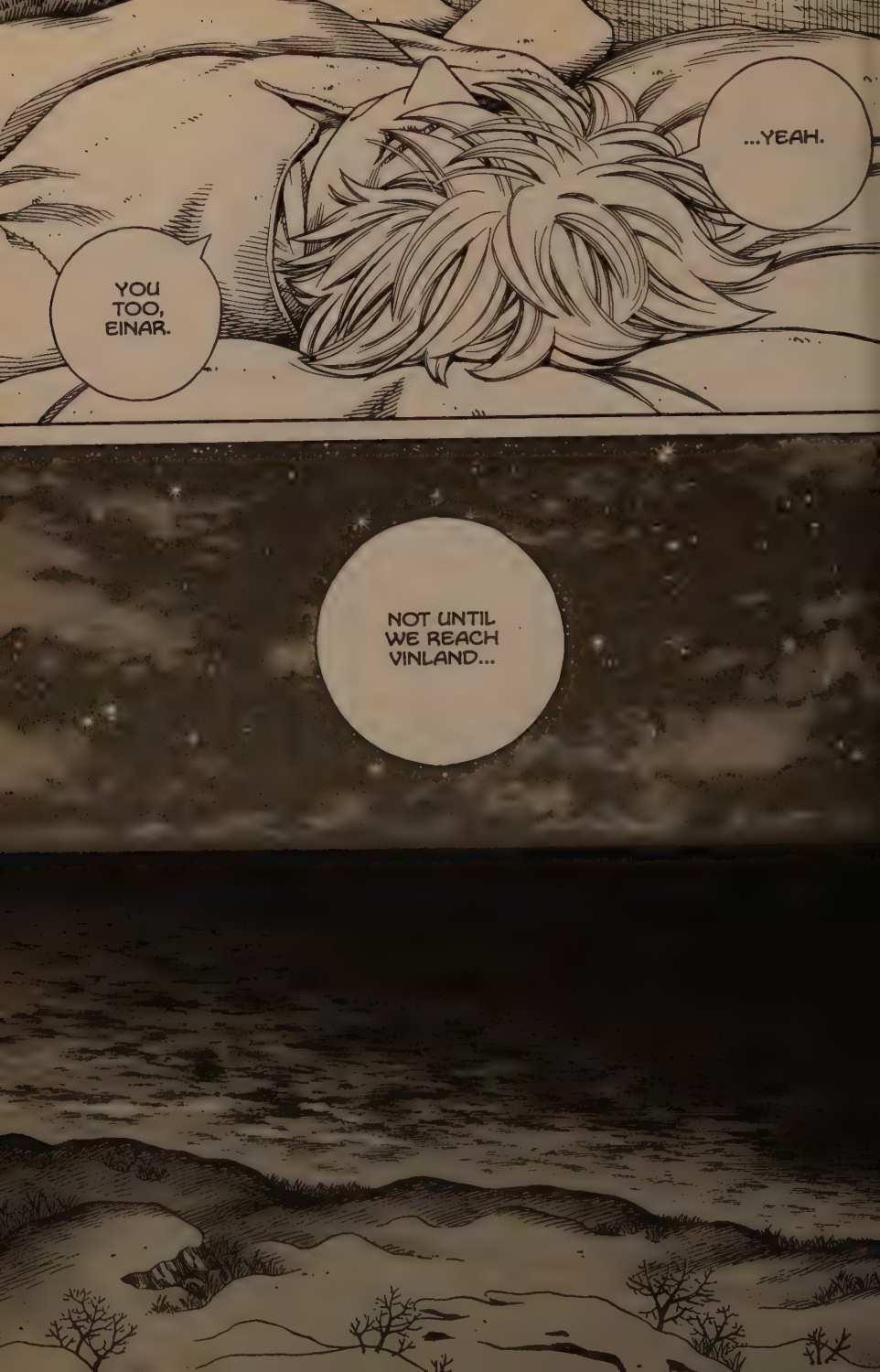
BERGEN, IN NORWAY.
WE'RE USING THE ANNEX OF A FRIEND OF LEIF'S.
I SEE...
THE ANTI-DOTE?! WERE WE IN TIME ?!
IS EVER-YONE ALL RIGHT ?!
DON'T MOVE!! YOU'RE NOT FULLY HEALED YET!!

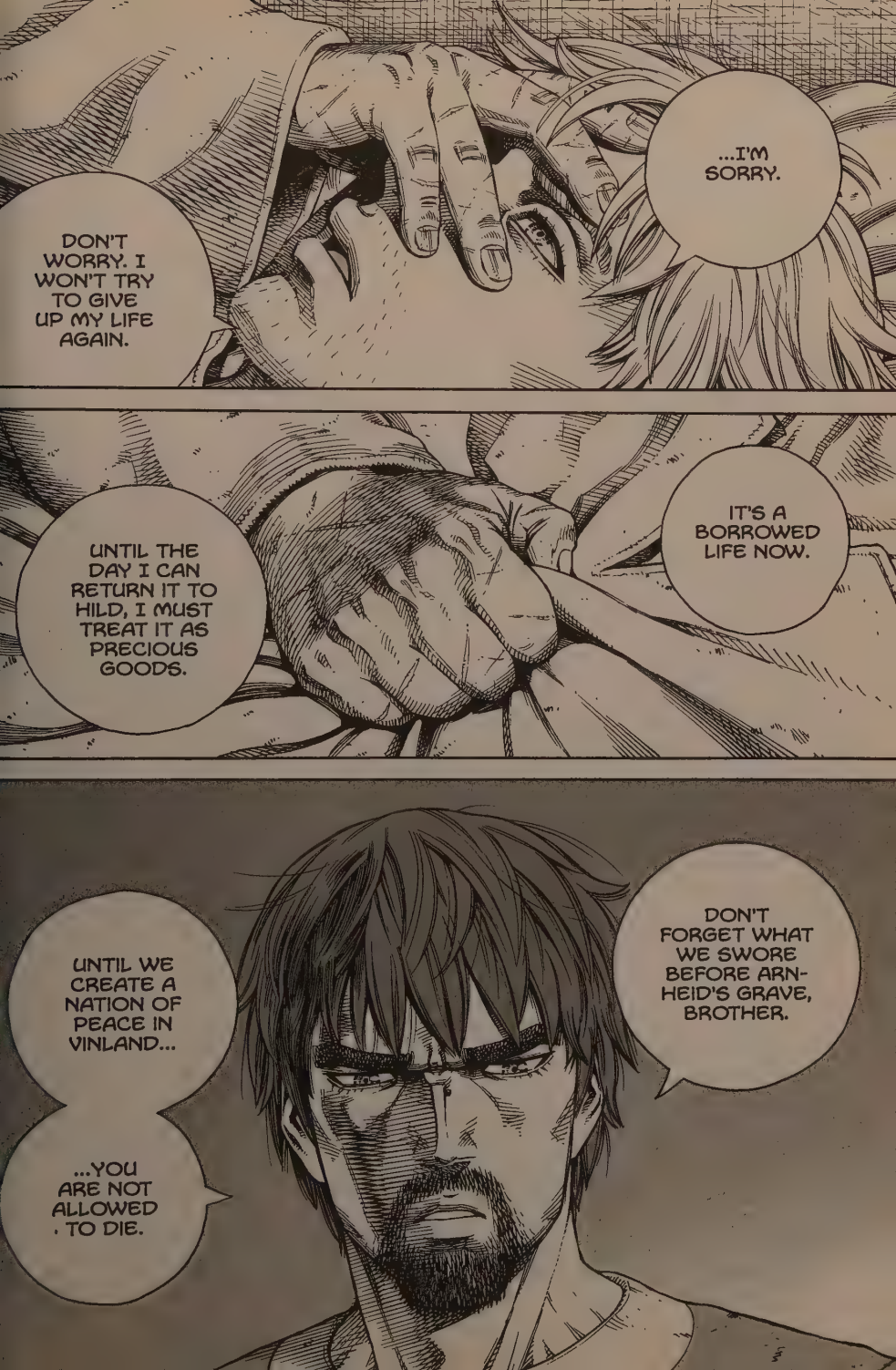

...AA-AHHH...
I'M SORRY, EINAR...
UNTIL SPRING ?!
I...
THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU SHOULD APOLOGIZE FOR.
...YOU GAVE UP, DIDN'T YOU?
THOR-FINN...
WHEN HILD WAS ABOUT TO DO YOU IN FOR GOOD...

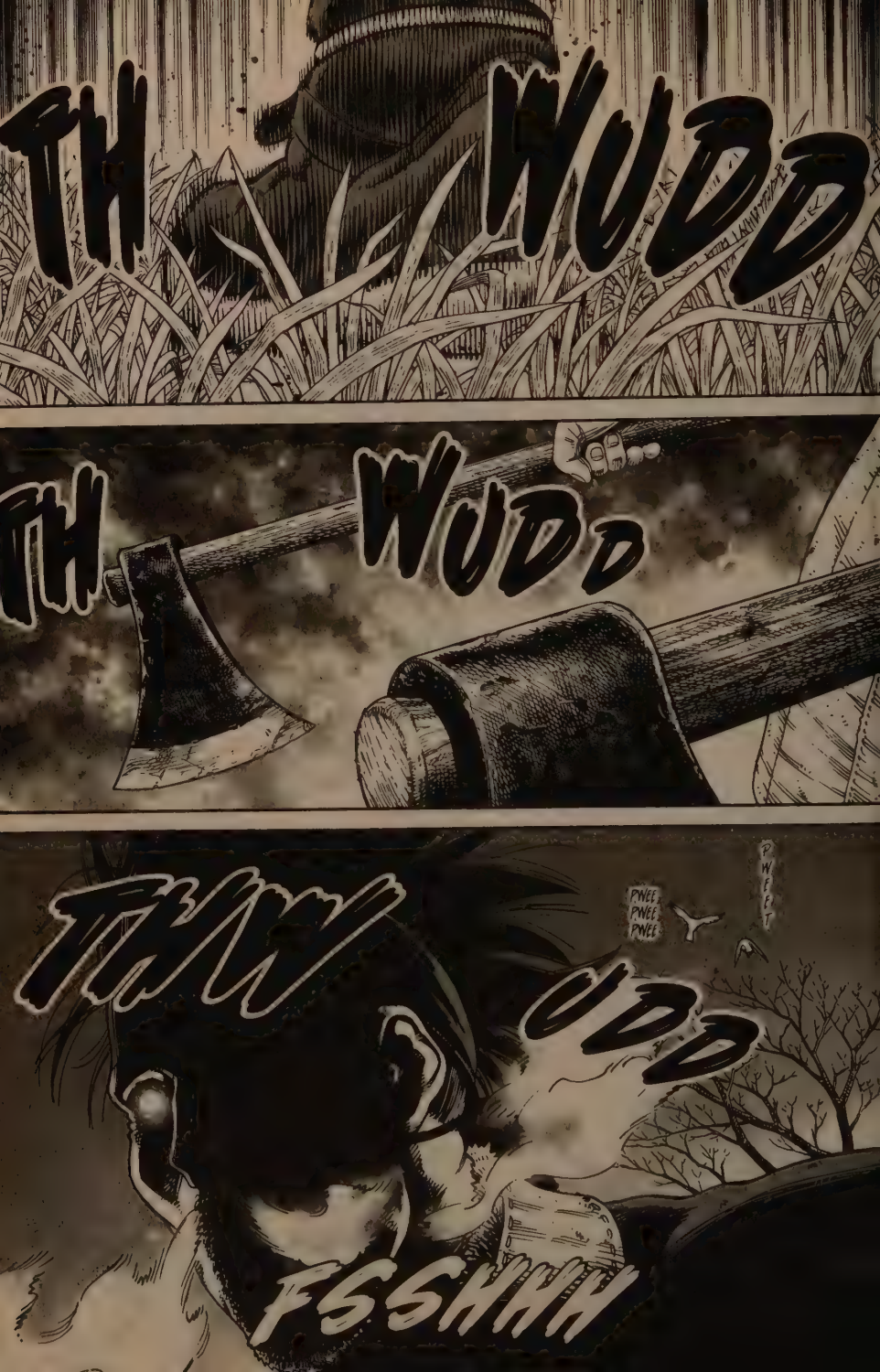

BUT YOU SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH YOUR OWN HEALTH FOR NOW.
I'LL BRING EVERYONE BY IN THE MORNING.
YOU TOOK FIVE OF THOSE BOLTS.
YOUR LEFT FOOT IS BROKEN.
AND YOU LOST MUCH BLOOD. YOU WERE IN BAD SHAPE, BROTHER.
IF YOU WANT TO WALK LIKE YOU DID BEFORE, YOU NEED ABSOLUTE REST.
THAT MEANS RECUPERATING HERE AT LEAST UNTIL SPRING.

...IN THAT CASE, I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU AS WELL.
YOU TRIED TO SACRIFICE YOUR OWN LIFE TO PROTECT ME, DIDN'T YOU?
THREE TIMES, IN FACT!
I WASN'T TRYING TO DIE, I JUST TRIED TO SAVE YOU.
SIGH...
...GOOD GRIEF...
IT'S THE SAME THING! THE WAY YOU SAVE PEOPLE IS...

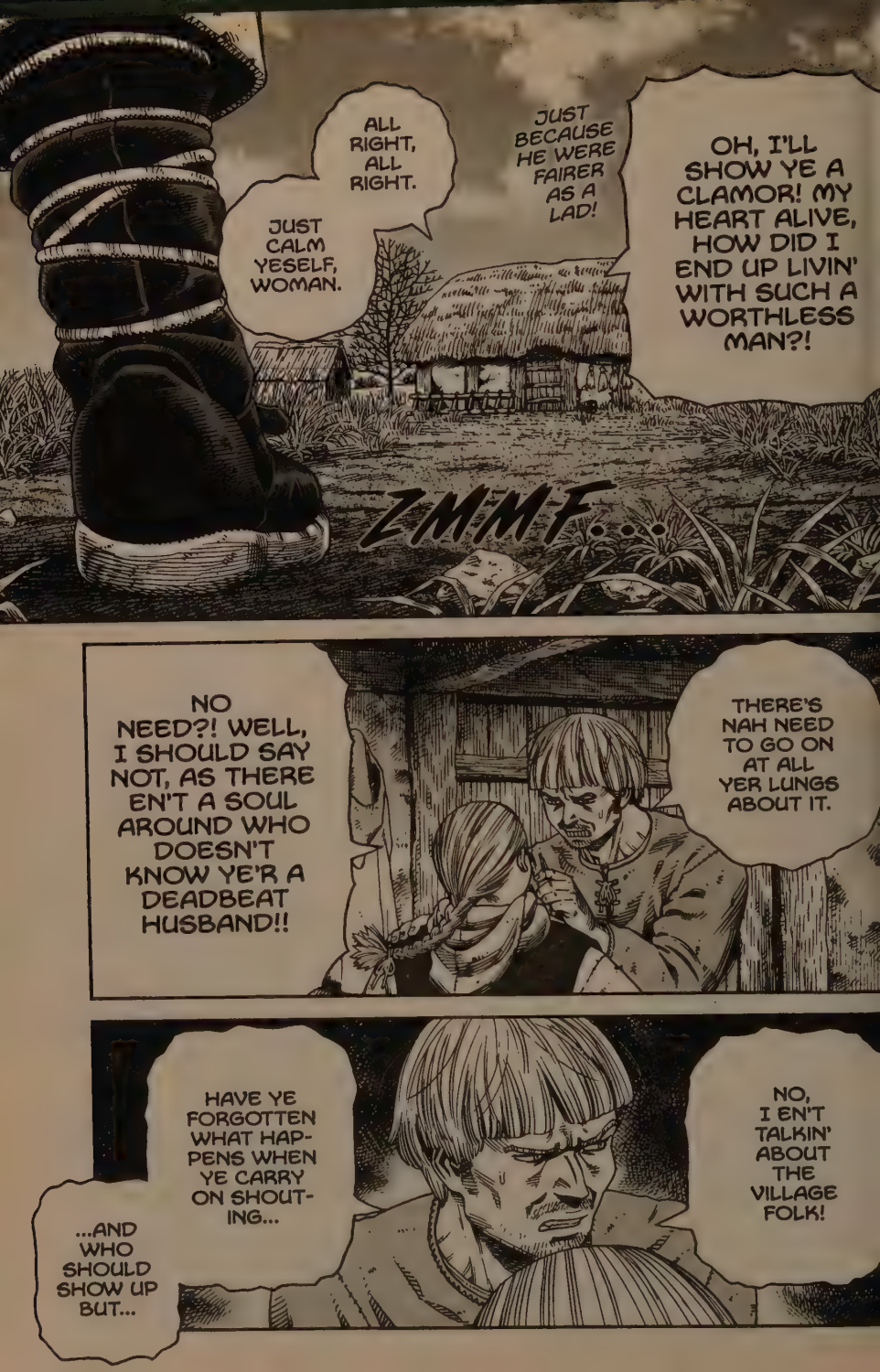
THAT'S WHAT YOU THOUGHT, ISN'T IT?
"OH, WELL. I'VE EARNED THIS."
"LET HER KILL ME."
THAT'S NOT FAIR.

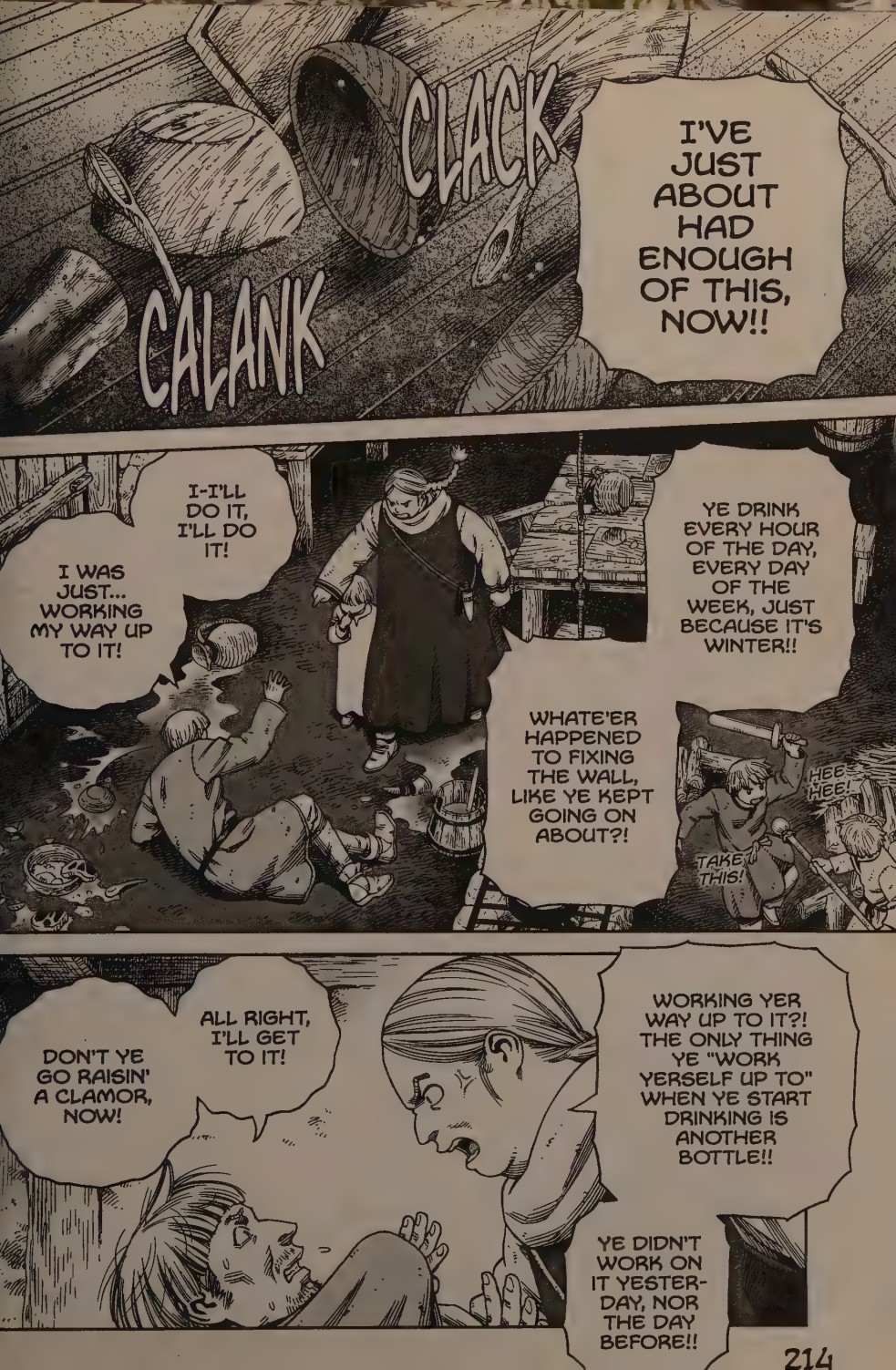

YOU TOO, EINAR.
...YEAH.
NOT UNTIL WE REACH VINLAND...


...I'M SORRY.
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T TRY TO GIVE UP MY LIFE AGAIN.
IT'S A BORROWED LIFE NOW.
UNTIL THE DAY I CAN RETURN IT TO HILD, I MUST TREAT IT AS PRECIOUS GOODS.
DON'T FORGET WHAT WE SWORE BEFORE ARN-HEID'S GRAVE, BROTHER.
UNTIL WE CREATE A NATION OF PEACE IN VINLAND...
...YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO DIE.


TH WUDD
TH WUDD
THW UDD
PWEE PWEE PWEE
PWEET
FSSHHH

PWEEP
PWEEP
CHIP
CHIP
CHIP
EAST ANGLIA
ENGLAND
JANUARY 1019


ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT.
JUST CALM YESELF, WOMAN.
JUST BECAUSE HE WERE FAIRER AS A LAD!
OH, I'LL SHOW YE A CLAMOR! MY HEART ALIVE, HOW DID I END UP LIVIN' WITH SUCH A WORTHLESS MAN?!
ZMMF...
NO NEED?! WELL, I SHOULD SAY NOT, AS THERE EN'T A SOUL AROUND WHO DOESN'T KNOW YE'R A DEADBEAT HUSBAND!!
THERE'S NAH NEED TO GO ON AT ALL YER LUNGS ABOUT IT.
HAVE YE FORGOTTEN WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YE CARRY ON SHOUTING...
...AND WHO SHOULD SHOW UP BUT...
NO, I EN'T TALKIN' ABOUT THE VILLAGE FOLK!


CLACK
CALANK
I'VE JUST ABOUT HAD ENOUGH OF THIS, NOW!!
I-I'LL DO IT, I'LL DO IT!
I WAS JUST... WORKING MY WAY UP TO IT!
YE DRINK EVERY HOUR OF THE DAY, EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK, JUST BECAUSE IT'S WINTER!!
WHATE'ER HAPPENED TO FIXING THE WALL, LIKE YE KEPT GOING ON ABOUT?!
HEE HEE!
TAKE THIS!
DON'T YE GO RAISIN' A CLAMOR, NOW!
ALL RIGHT, I'LL GET TO IT!
WORKING YER WAY UP TO IT?! THE ONLY THING YE "WORK YERSELF UP TO" WHEN YE START DRINKING IS ANOTHER BOTTLE!!
YE DIDN'T WORK ON IT YESTER-DAY, NOR THE DAY BEFORE!!

FSHH...

IT'S LORD THOR-KELL!!

HABAKUK
CLANK
CLUNK
PLIK PLIK
PLAK
S-S-SPEAK O' THE DEVIL!
HWAAAH!!
ZMMF...

YES, BATTLE, WE KNOW.

IT'LL BE COMING ALONG ANY MOMENT NOW.

BATTLE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK AN DOOR IS FOR?

C'MON, BOSS, YOU KNOW YOU SHOULDN'T GO PUNCHING HOLES IN PEOPLE'S WALLS.

I KNOW, I KNOW.

BATTLE...

SORRY ABOUT THE TROUBLE

IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT IT SHOULD HELP YOU FIX THE WALL.

CLINK

...THE WALL, HUSBAND...

I'D BETTER FIX THAT.

LET ME IN.

I WANT IN ON THE BATTLE.

I HEARD YOU.

A BATTLE.

GRAAH...

WAAAH! MOMMY!!

HE'S FREAKIN' HUGE!

I LOVE YE, HUBBY!!

JUST PEACEFUL, LOVIN' FOLK!!

N-NO! NO BATTLE HERE!!

OH, GREAT.

PLEASE LEAVE!

KNOW ANY BATTLES NEARBY?

WE DON'T, M'LORD!!

WHERE IS IT?! WHO WITH?! TELL ME NOW!!

GUNK GUNK GUNK

A BATTLE!! IT'S A BATTLE, I CAN TELL!!

BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

?!

DON'T SAY IT!

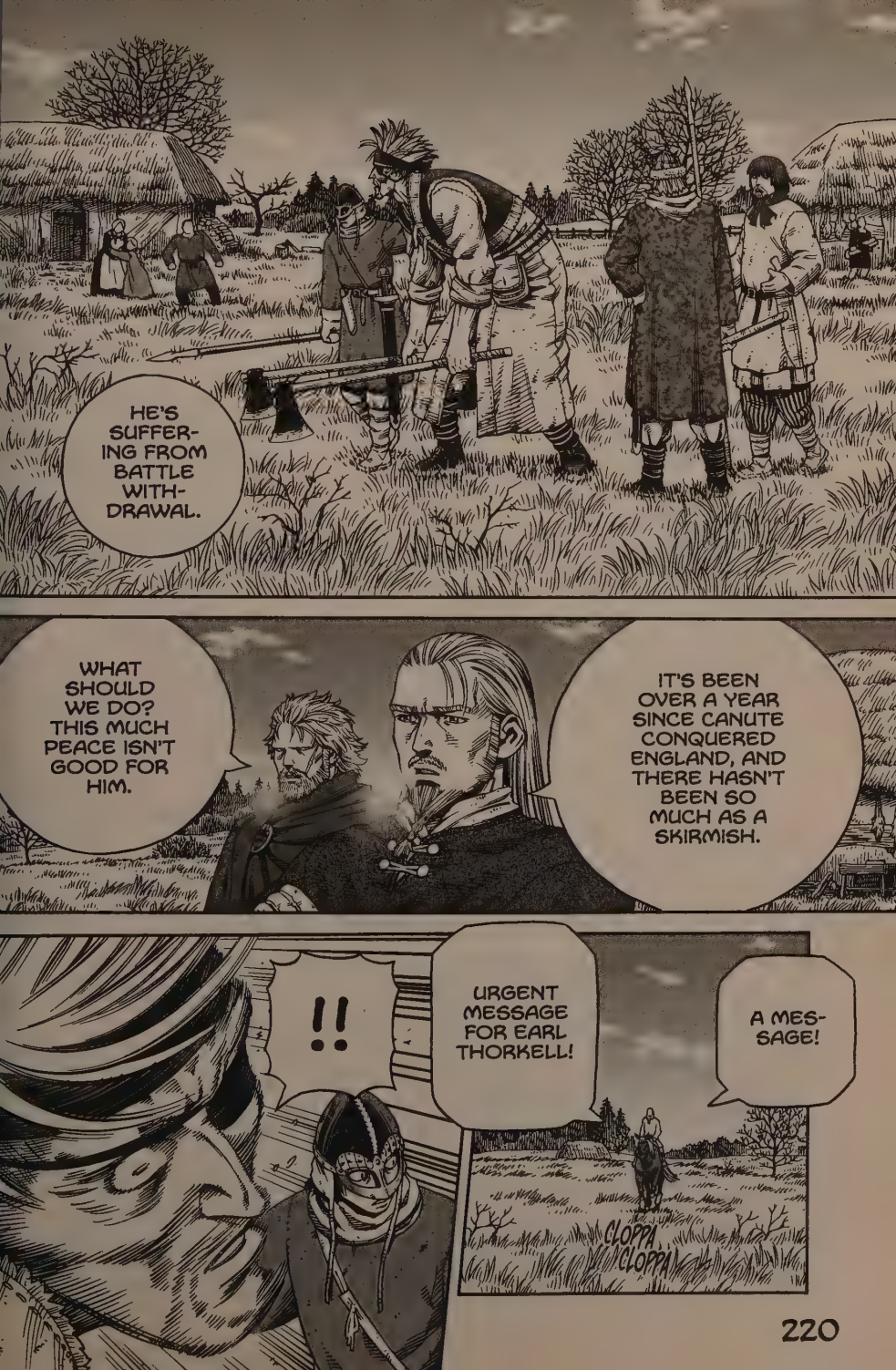
WHAT ?!

IT'S J-JUST THE OPPO-SITE...

KING CANUTE HAS RETURNED TO ENGLAND.

ALL STA-TIONARY FORCES...

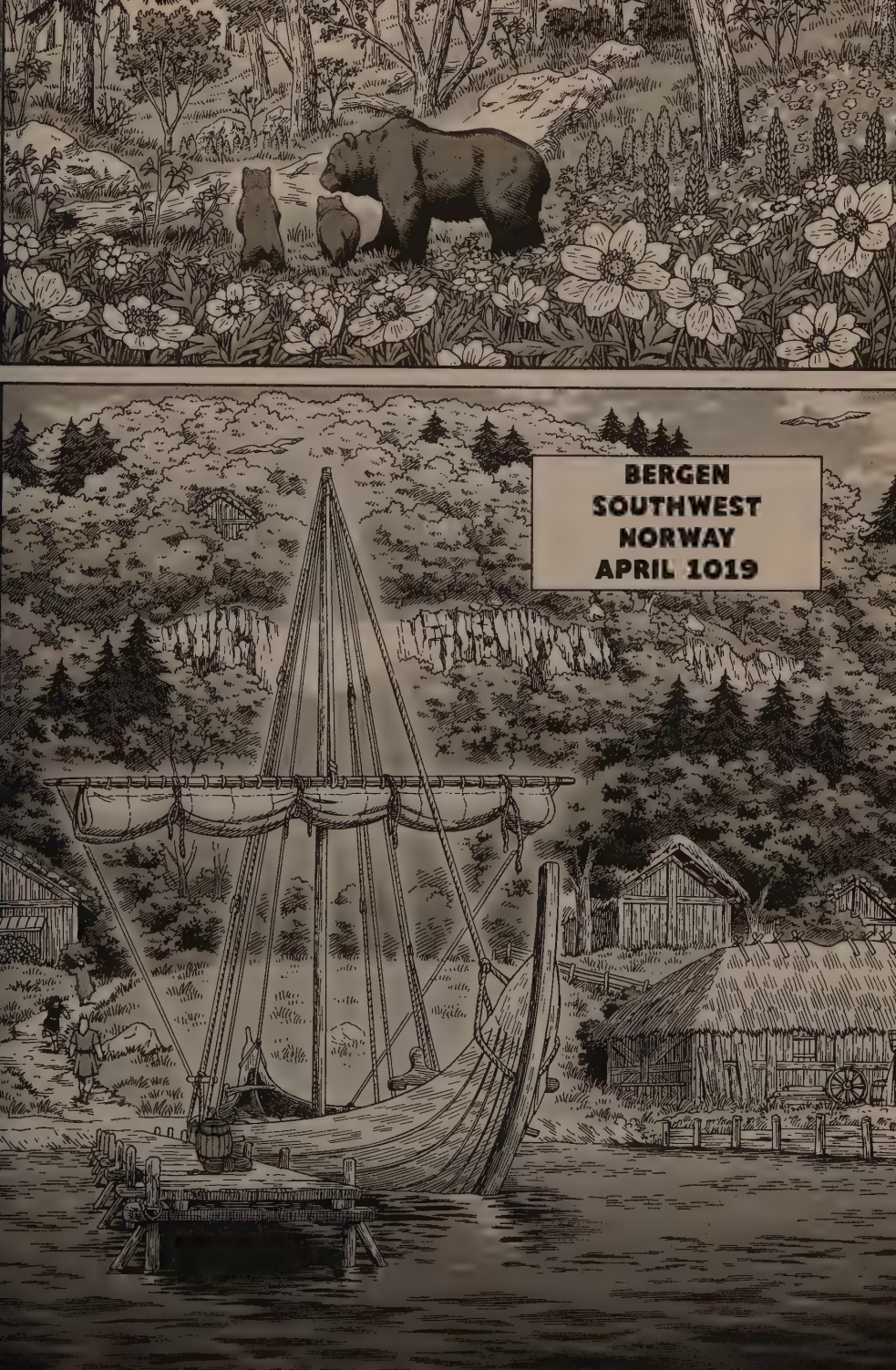
...ARE TO DISPERSE AND RETURN TO DENMARK, BY HIS ROYAL DECREE.

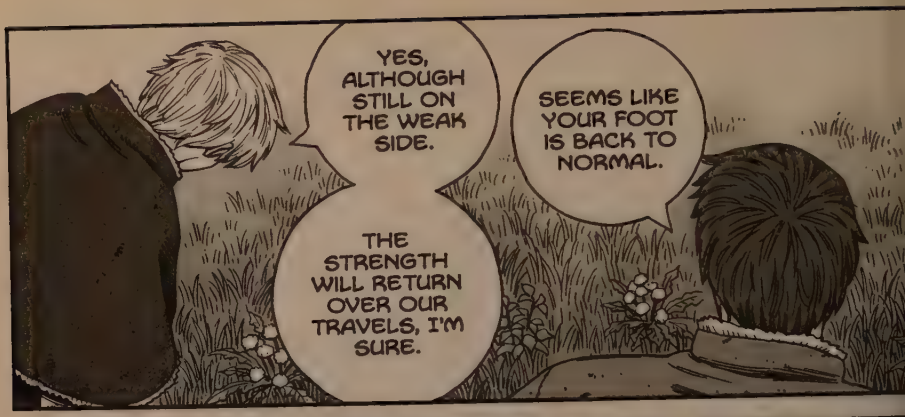

HE'S SUFFERING FROM BATTLE WITHDRAWAL.
WHAT SHOULD WE DO? THIS MUCH PEACE ISN'T GOOD FOR HIM.
IT'S BEEN OVER A YEAR SINCE CANUTE CONQUERED ENGLAND, AND THERE HASN'T BEEN SO MUCH AS A SKIRMISH.
!!
URGENT MESSAGE FOR EARL THORKELL!
A MESSAGE!
CLOPPA CLOPPA

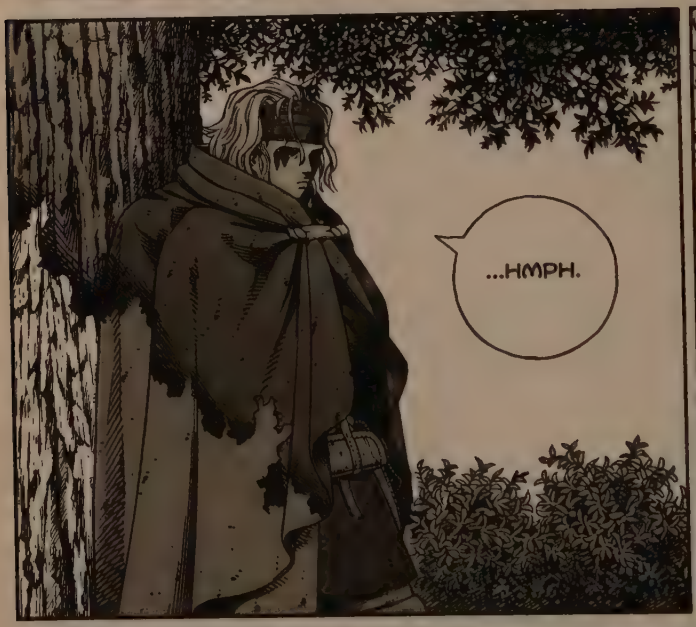
CHAPTER 124: DEPARTING NORWAY

...AND WORK TO MAINTAIN THE KING'S PEACE IN THE REALM...
BUT MY LORD THOR-KELL AND HIS VASSALS ARE TO REMAIN IN ENGLAND...
DAMN IT ALL! ANY MORE PEACE COULD BE FATAL!!
NO! HE'S NOT BREATH-ING!
AAAH
BOSS?! BOSS!!

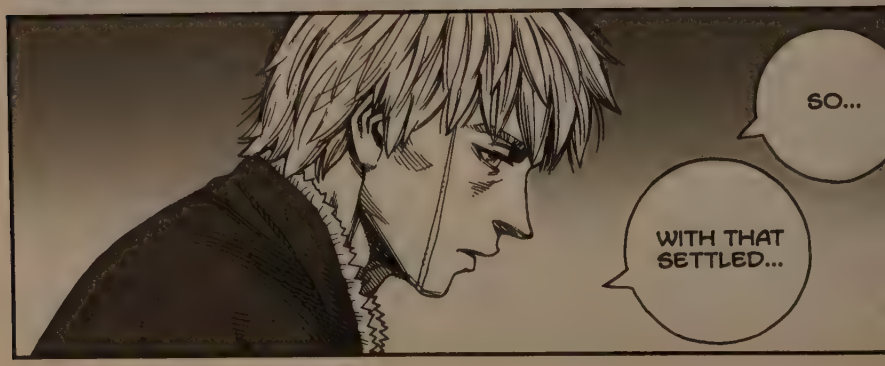
YOU CAN DO IT!
THERE YOU GO, BE STRONG.
OH!
URK URK
I THINK HIS HEAD'S TOO HEAVY.
NO, NO, HE'S GOT IT.
YANK
SHNUP
AH!
JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE...
THERE YOU GO STAY BAL-ANCED
HA HA HA


BERGEN
SOUTHWEST
NORWAY
APRIL 1019


YES, ALTHOUGH STILL ON THE WEAK SIDE.
SEEMS LIKE YOUR FOOT IS BACK TO NORMAL.
THE STRENGTH WILL RETURN OVER OUR TRAVELS, I'M SURE.

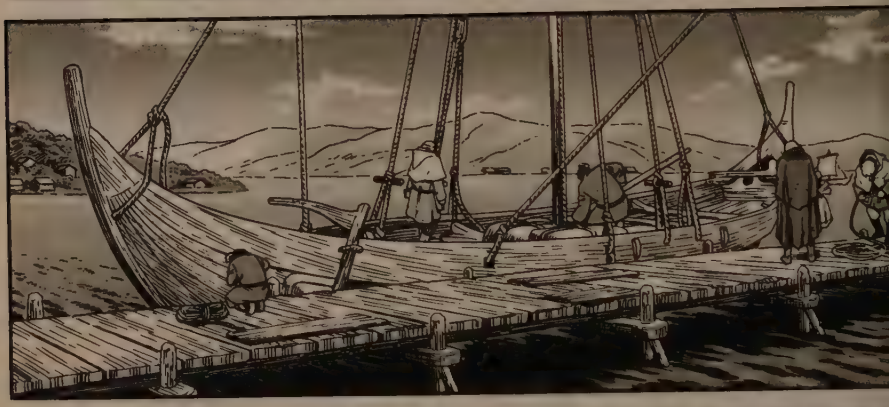

...HMPH.

HA HA HA HA


SO...
WITH THAT SETTLED...

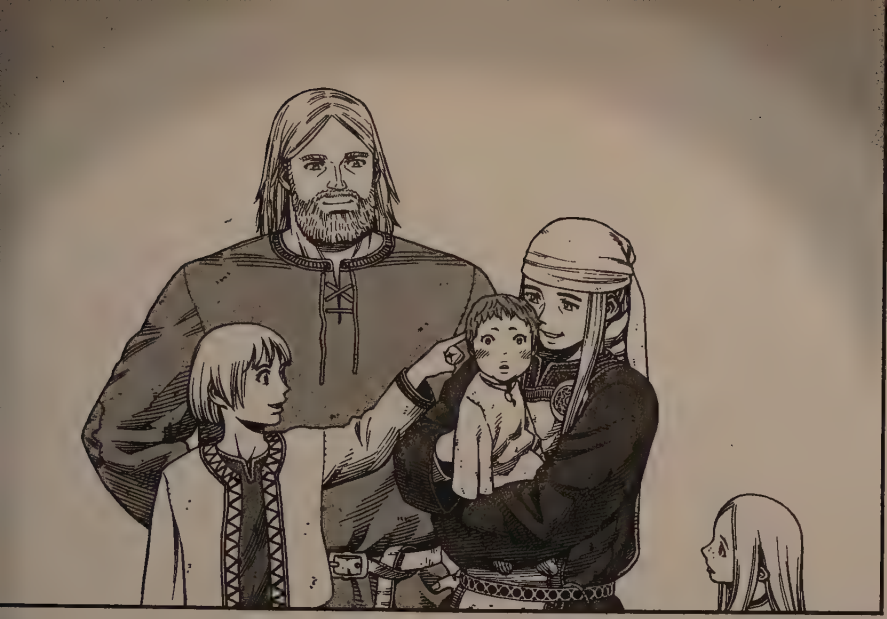
RAAA
YOU STOOD UP ALL ON YOUR OWN!
WITH A BIT OF HELP!
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
BOOH !!
HHH
YOU'RE SO STRONG, KARLI!
WHEN YOU HAVE SOME HELP!
CAN YOU STAND UP ON YOUR OWN?
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU, YOUNG THORFINN?
OOOH
WOW!
KTAMP
HUP
ROLL

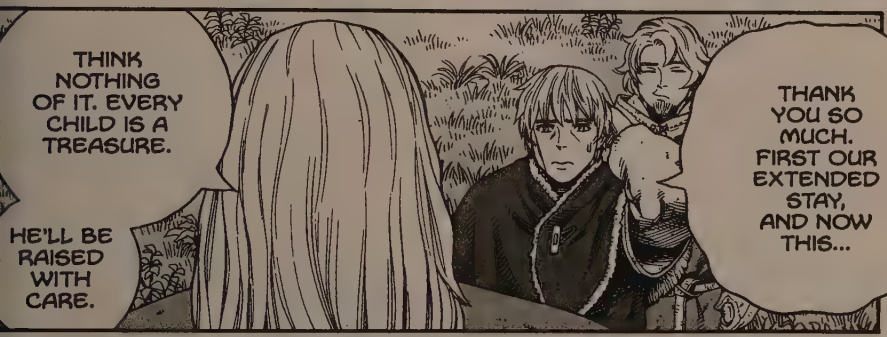
BYE-BYE, KARLI...
WOOF, WOOF WOOF

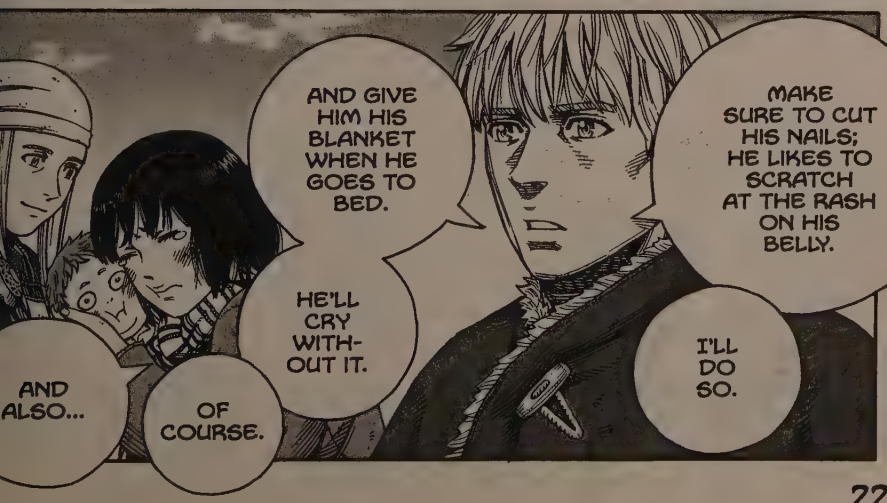


HE'LL FORGET ABOUT US RIGHT AWAY.
IGNORE IT.
HE'S CRYING...

GWAAAAH WAAAAAA

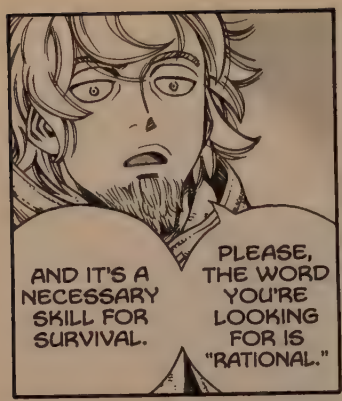


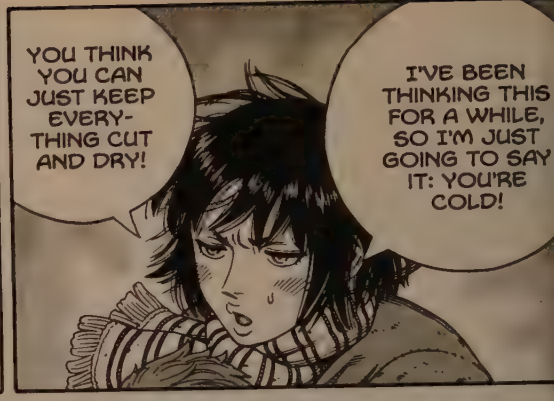

THANK YOU SO MUCH. FIRST OUR EXTENDED STAY, AND NOW THIS...
THINK NOTHING OF IT. EVERY CHILD IS A TREASURE.
HE'LL BE RAISED WITH CARE.


MAKE SURE TO CUT HIS NAILS; HE LIKES TO SCRATCH AT THE RASH ON HIS BELLY.
I'LL DO SO.
AND GIVE HIM HIS BLANKET WHEN HE GOES TO BED.
HE'LL CRY WITH-OUT IT.
AND ALSO...
OF COURSE.

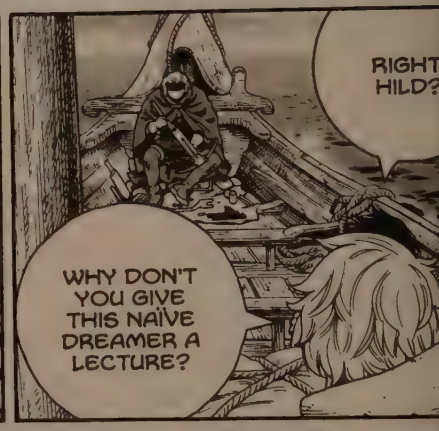
ZBOOSH
"YOU CAN'T"? NO...
THIS IS WHAT WE CAN'T DO.

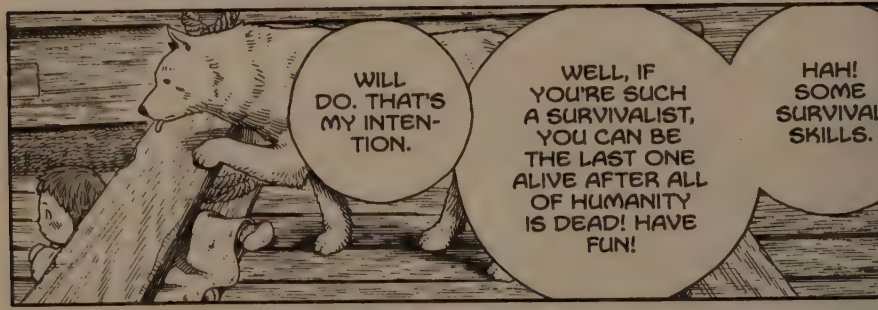
BOO-BOOOOO!
WAAAH!
BOOOOO...
BOO-BOO!!
...I CAN'T.
BOO-BOOOOO...
WAAAAH
DUT
DUT
DUT
I GAAA-AAN'T!!
HEY! STOP!!

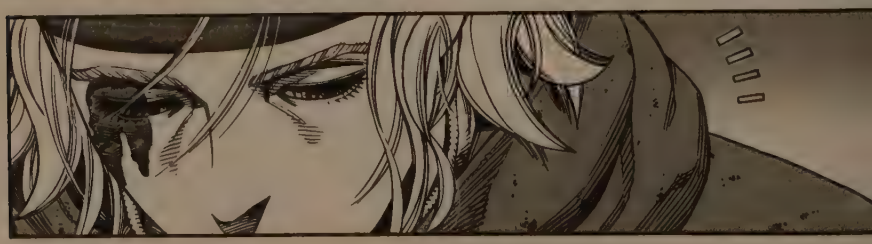

AND IT'S A NECESSARY SKILL FOR SURVIVAL.
PLEASE, THE WORD YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IS "RATIONAL."


YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST KEEP EVERY-THING CUT AND DRY!
I'VE BEEN THINKING THIS FOR A WHILE, SO I'M JUST GOING TO SAY IT: YOU'RE COLD!

...WHY DO YOU KEEP ASKING HILD?
BECAUSE I KNOW WHEN TO SUCK UP TO THE MIGHTY.


RIGHT, HILD?
WHY DON'T YOU GIVE THIS NAÏVE DREAMER A LECTURE?


WILL DO. THAT'S MY INTEN-TION.
WELL, IF YOU'RE SUCH A SURVIVALIST, YOU CAN BE THE LAST ONE ALIVE AFTER ALL OF HUMANITY IS DEAD! HAVE FUN!
HAH! SOME SURVIVAL SKILLS.



YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD STANDER!

HEE HEE!

DON'T YOU GET IT? WE'RE ON A HARROWING LONG-DISTANCE JOURNEY!

WE CAN'T DO THIS! WE CAN'T TAKE KARLI ALONG.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR A FOSTER HOME ON OUR NEXT STOP.

AND NO COMPLAINING THIS TIME.

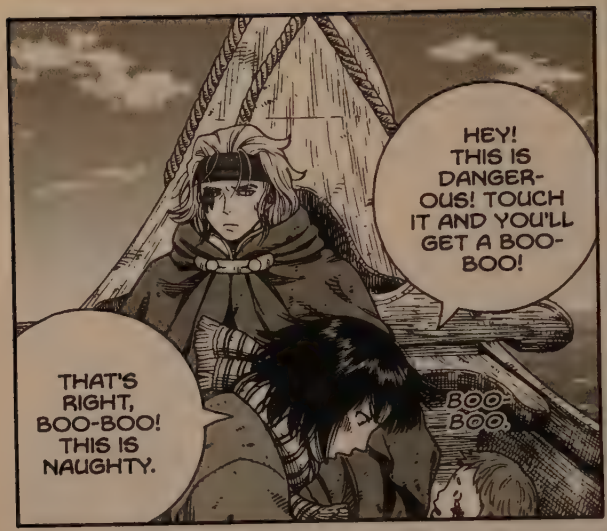
"THAT" IS CERTAINLY NOT "THAT."

BUT WE BROUGHT HIM ALONG, AND THAT'S THAT.

FSHHH

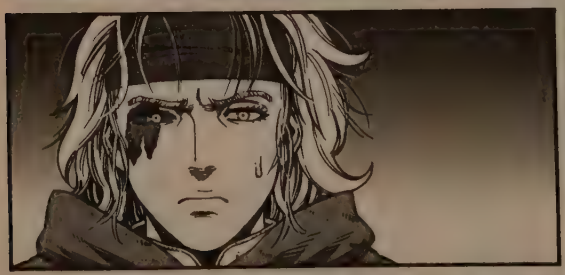
RIGHT, HILD?

I'M RIGHT, AREN'T I?

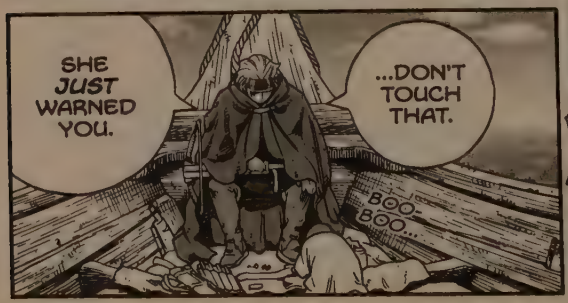

HEY! THIS IS DANGER-OUS! TOUCH IT AND YOU'LL GET A BOO-BOO!
THAT'S RIGHT, BOO-BOO! THIS IS NAUGHTY.
BOO-BOO.

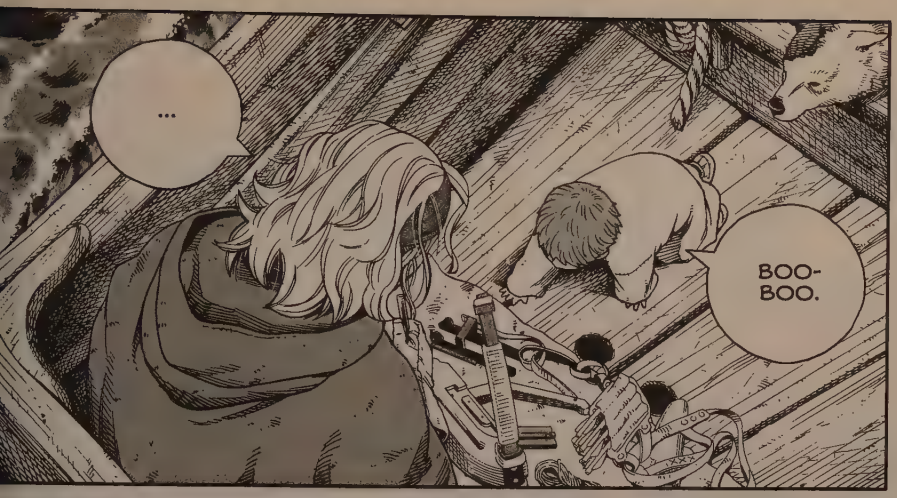
NGWA
SORRY! I TOOK MY EYES OFF HIM
A
R

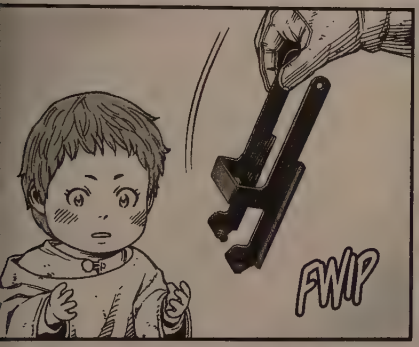
COMING!
WE NEED HELP REEFING THE SAIL, GUDRI.

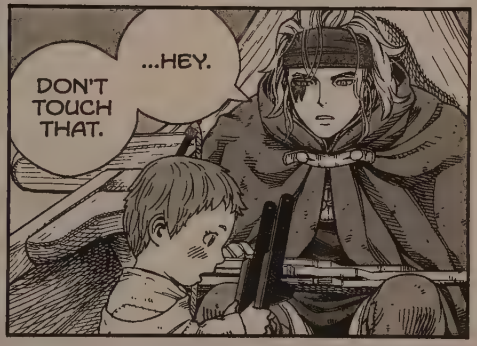


SORRY, HILD, CAN YO WATCH KARLI FO A MINUTE
?!

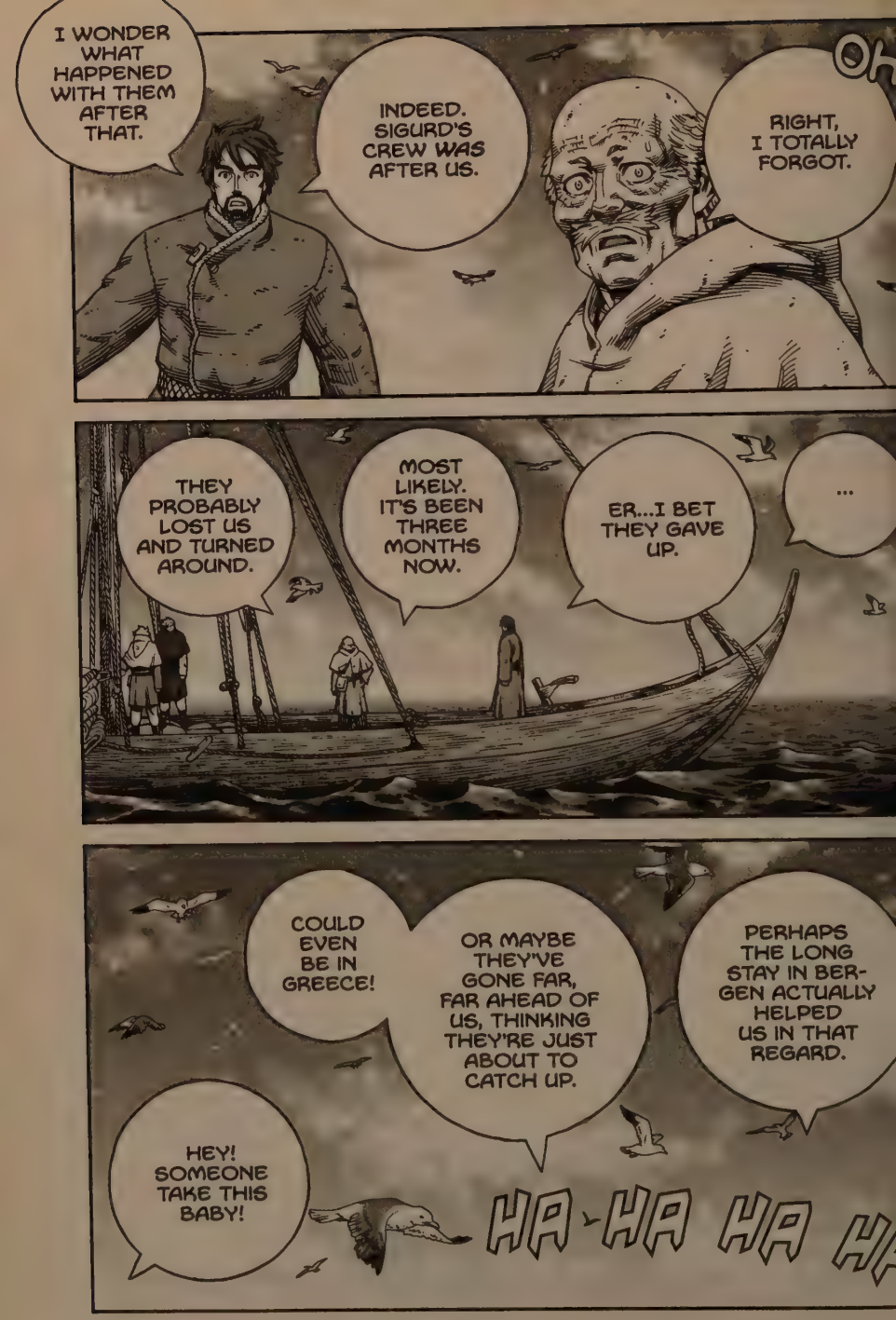

SHE JUST WARNED YOU.
...DON'T TOUCH THAT.
BOO-BOO...

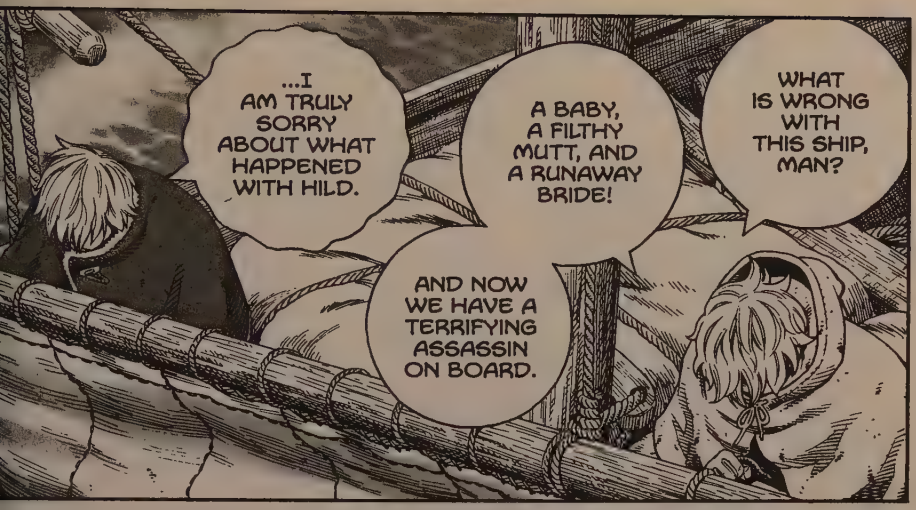




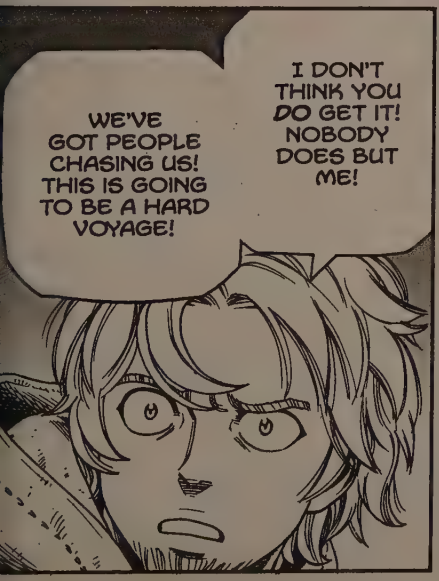


HWAAAAA
WOOF
WOOF
WOOF
WOOF
?!

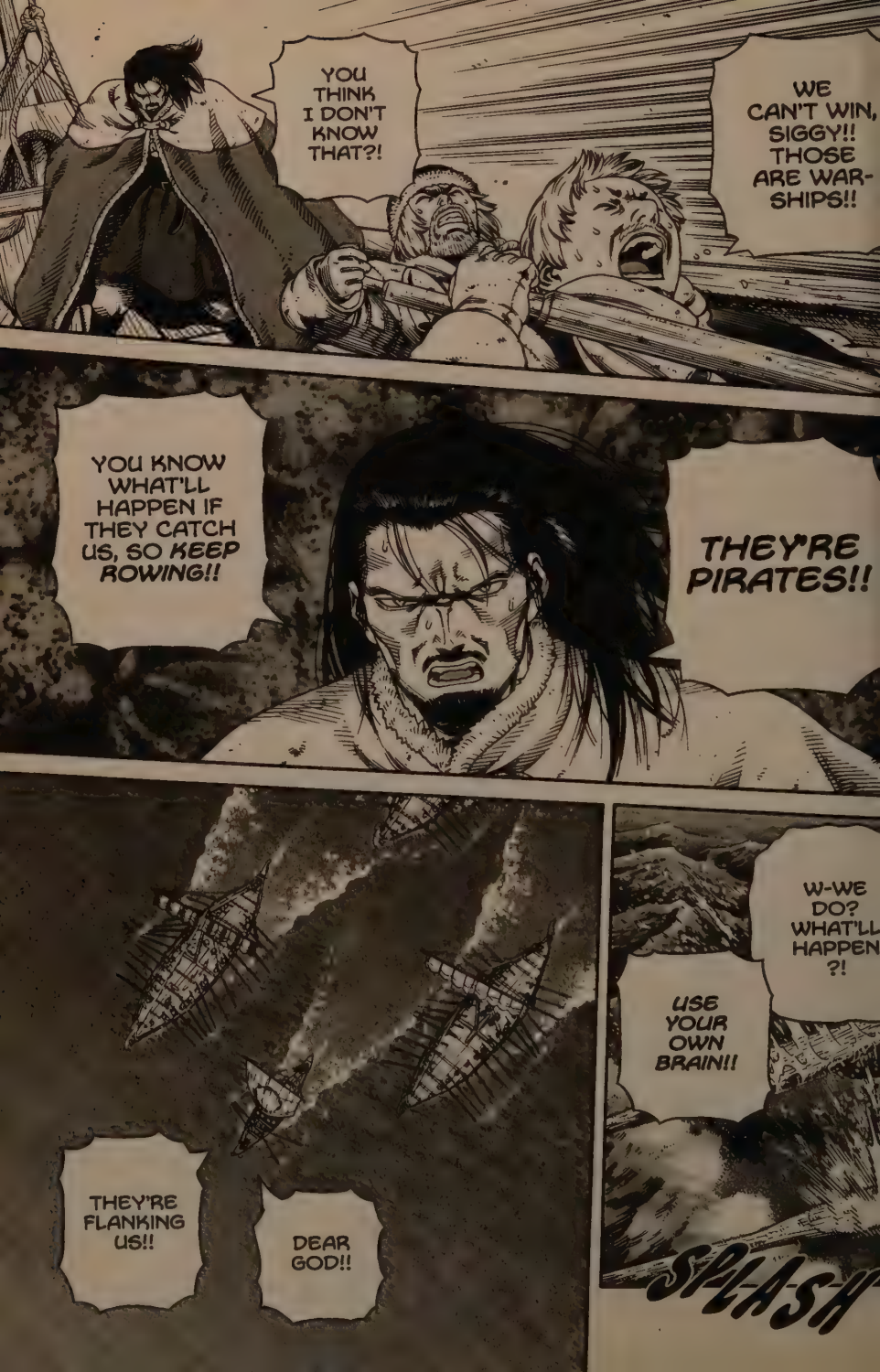

I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED WITH THEM AFTER THAT.
INDEED. SIGURD'S CREW WAS AFTER US.
RIGHT, I TOTALLY FORGOT.
THEY PROBABLY LOST US AND TURNED AROUND.
MOST LIKELY. IT'S BEEN THREE MONTHS NOW.
ER...I BET THEY GAVE UP.
...
COULD EVEN BE IN GREECE!
OR MAYBE THEY'VE GONE FAR, FAR AHEAD OF US, THINKING THEY'RE JUST ABOUT TO CATCH UP.
PERHAPS THE LONG STAY IN BERGEN ACTUALLY HELPED US IN THAT REGARD.
HEY! SOMEONE TAKE THIS BABY!
HA-HA HA

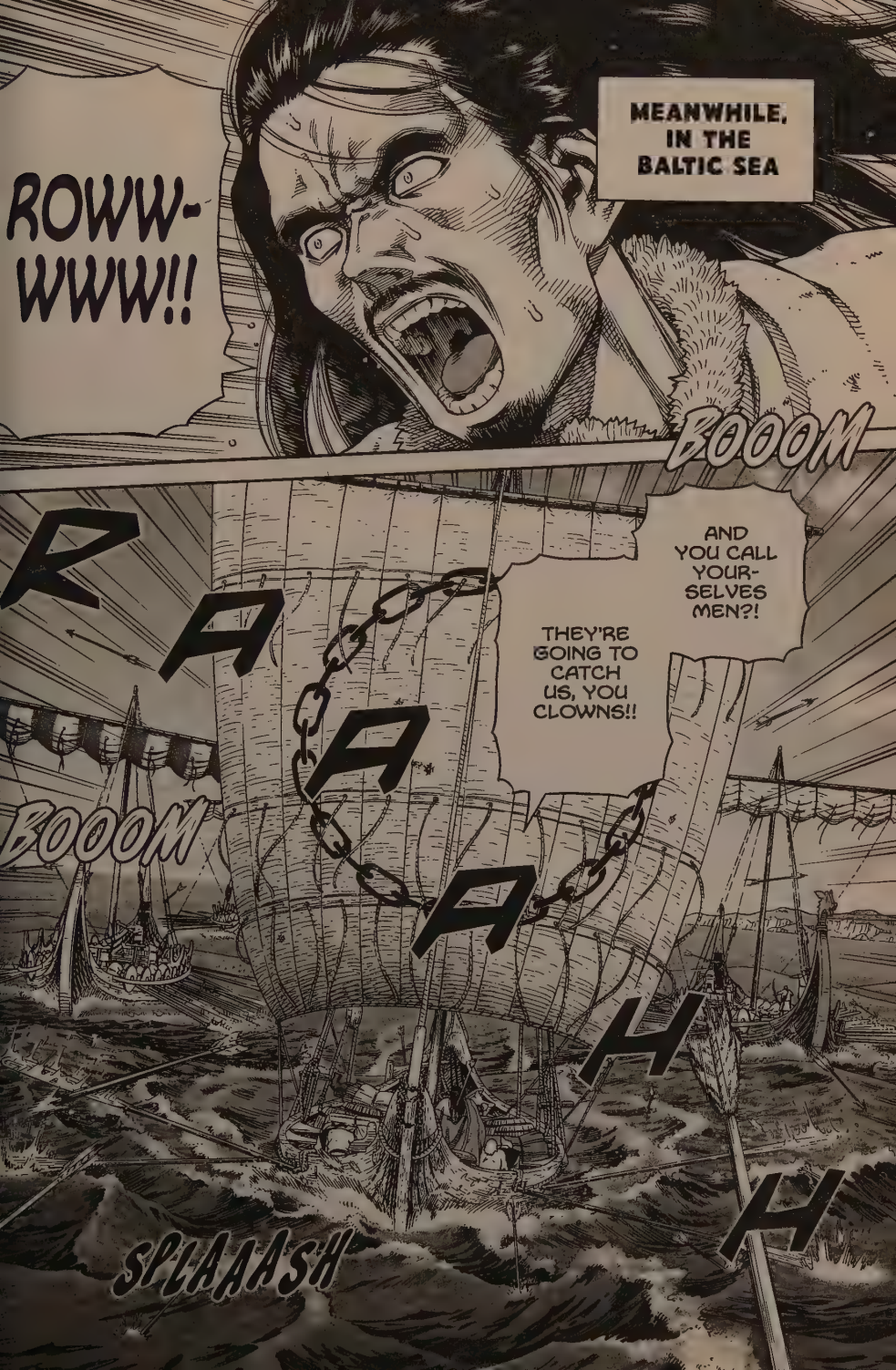

...I AM TRULY SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED WITH HILD.
A BABY, A FILTHY MUTT, AND A RUNAWAY BRIDE!
WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS SHIP, MAN?
AND NOW WE HAVE A TERRIFYING ASSASSIN ON BOARD.

...I'M ACTUALLY HAPPY TO STILL HAVE KARLI ALONG WITH US.
BUT TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH...

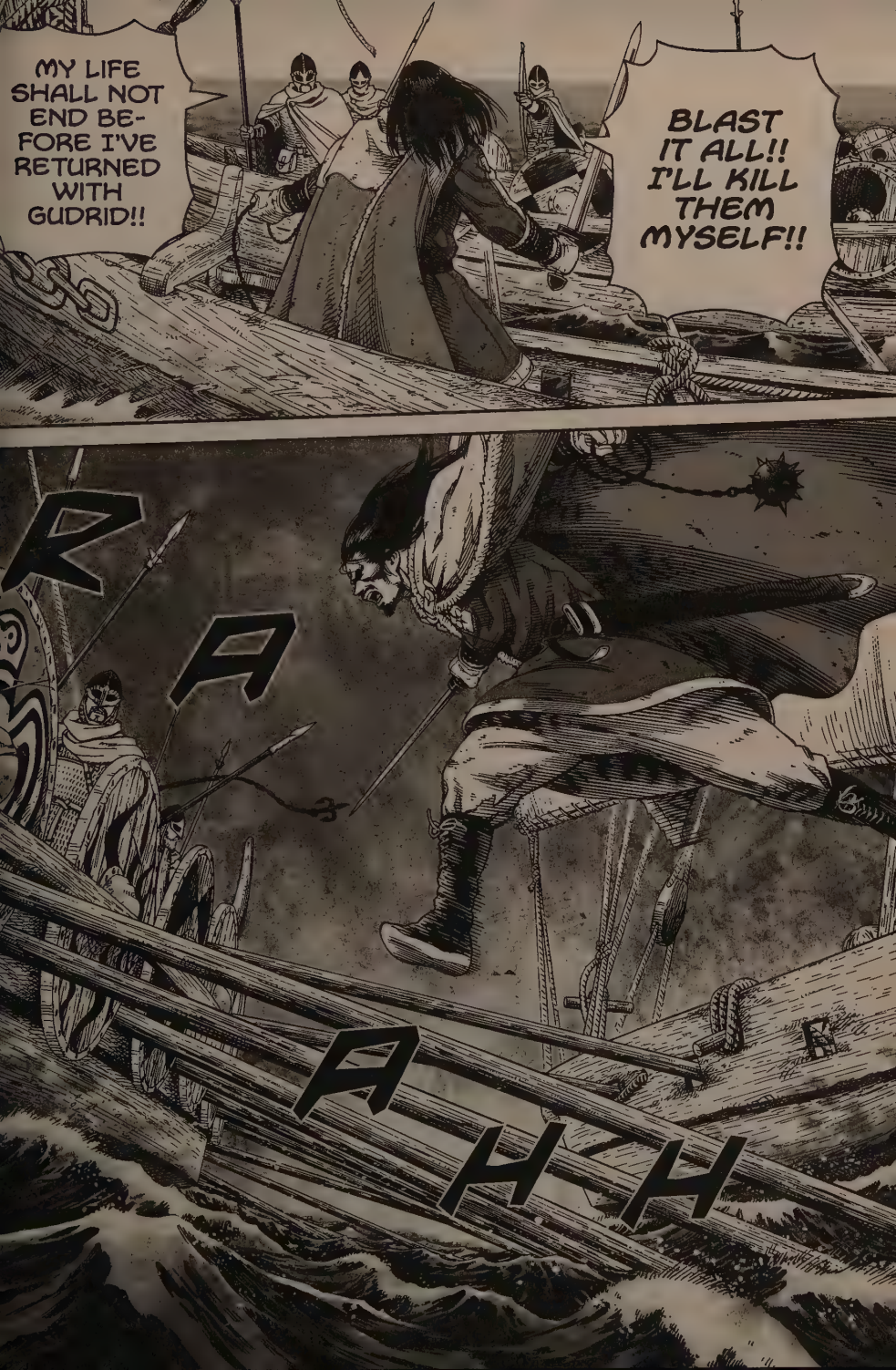

WE'VE GOT PEOPLE CHASING US! THIS IS GOING TO BE A HARD VOYAGE!
I DON'T THINK YOU *DO* GET IT! NOBODY DOES BUT ME!

I KNOW, I KNOW.
WE'LL FIND A SOLU-TION.
EVEN YOU...?
LISTEN, I SUGGESTED THAT FOR KARLI'S SAKE.


YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW THAT?!
WE CAN'T WIN, SIGGY!! THOSE ARE WAR-SHIPS!!
YOU KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF THEY CATCH US, SO KEEP ROWING!!
THEY'RE PIRATES!!
THEY'RE FLANKING US!!
DEAR GOD!!
W-WE DO? WHAT'LL HAPPEN ?!
USE YOUR OWN BRAIN!!
SPLASH


MEANWHILE, IN THE BALTIC SEA
ROWW-WWW!!
BOOOM
AND YOU CALL YOUR-SELVES MEN?!
THEY'RE GOING TO CATCH US, YOU CLOWNS!!
RAAAHH
BOOOM
SPLAASH

VINLAND SAGA

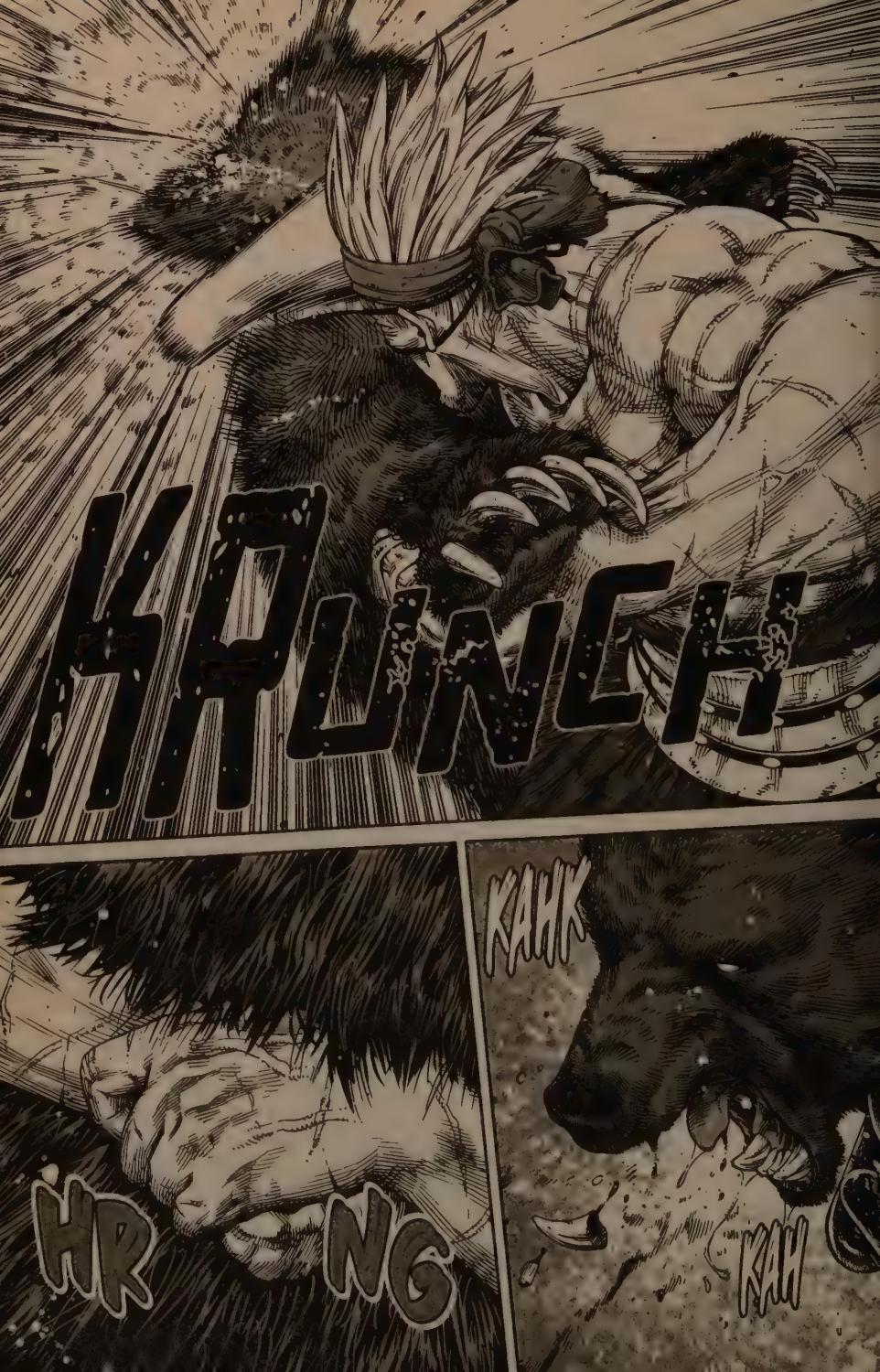

MY LIFE SHALL NOT END BEFORE I'VE RETURNED WITH GUDRID!!
BLAST IT ALL!! I'LL KILL THEM MYSELF!!
RAAHH

BWOAAAAAAH
GRRLL
ZAAAAF
GWOF
KCHINGLE

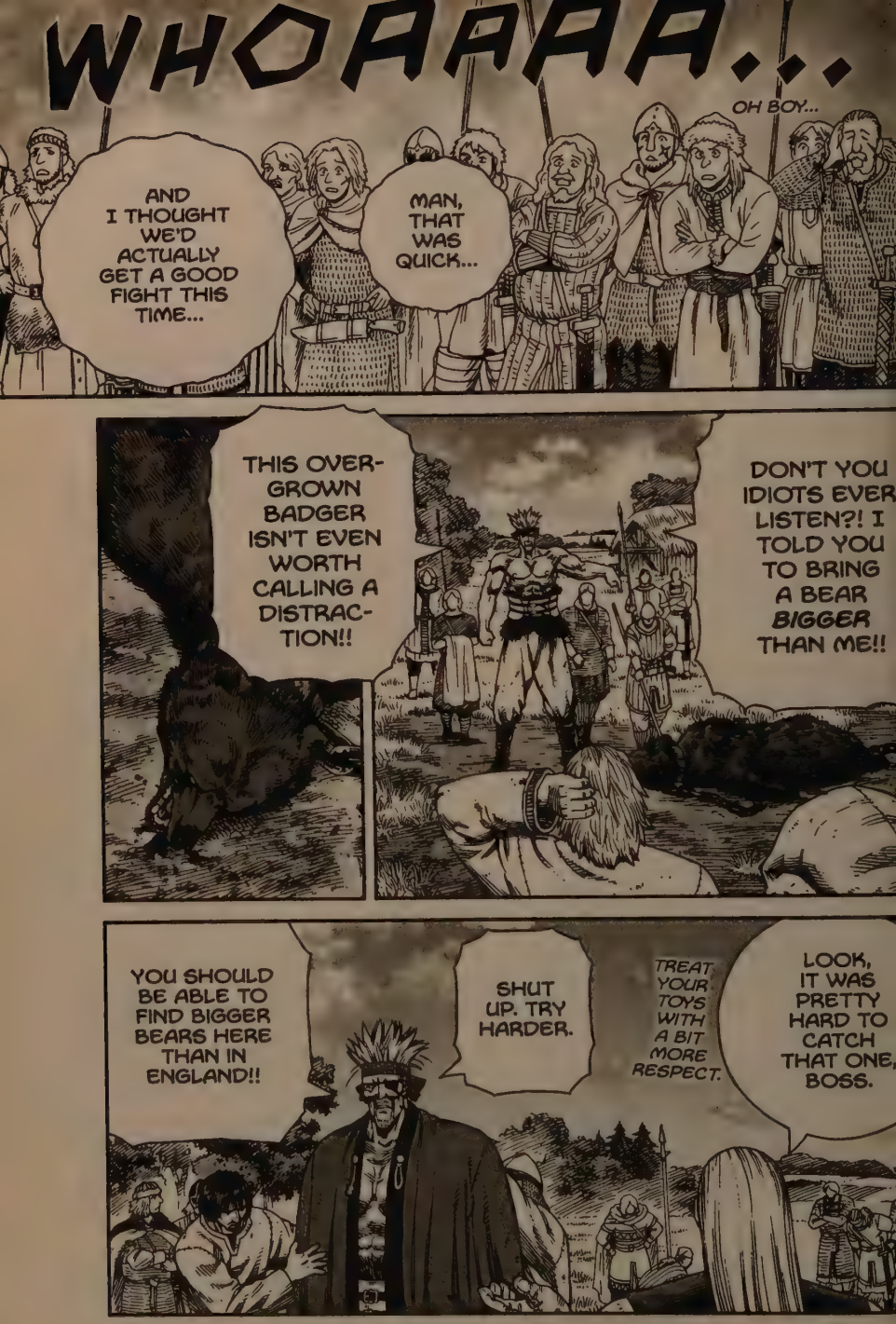
CHAPTER 125: WAR IN THE BALTIC (1)

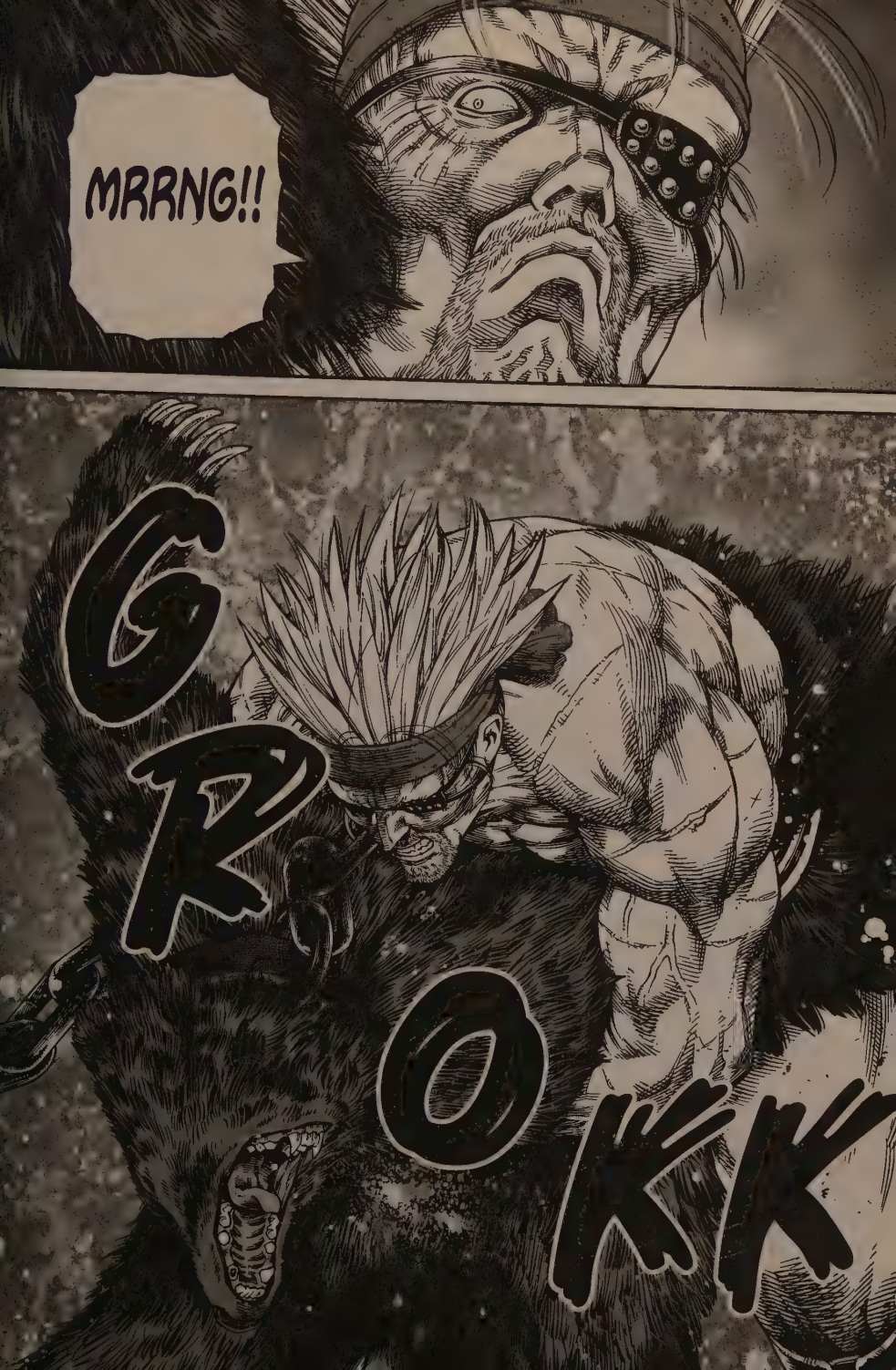
GROAA
SHAA

HMPH.
CRUKK
CRIK

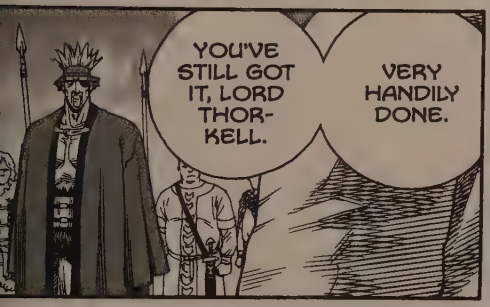

HUNCH
HR
NG
KAHK
KAH

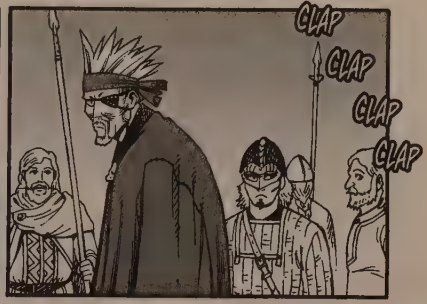
SHA
KK
GRAH


WHOAAAA...
OH BOY...
AND I THOUGHT WE'D ACTUALLY GET A GOOD FIGHT THIS TIME...
MAN, THAT WAS QUICK...
THIS OVER-GROWN BADGER ISN'T EVEN WORTH CALLING A DISTRAC-TION!!
DON'T YOU IDIOTS EVER LISTEN?! I TOLD YOU TO BRING A BEAR BIGGER THAN ME!!
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND BIGGER BEARS HERE THAN IN ENGLAND!!
SHUT UP. TRY HARDER.
TREAT YOUR TOYS WITH A BIT MORE RESPECT.
LOOK, IT WAS PRETTY HARD TO CATCH THAT ONE, BOSS.


MRRNG!!
GROKK

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU WANT, DICE-HEAD? HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?
I'VE JUST LANDED AT JELLING, IN FACT.
SHUT YOUR MOUTH.
NOT INTERESTED IN ANY KIND OF HIGH-FALUTIN' GREETINGS.
IT PLEASES ME TO SEE YOU I GOOD HEALTH MY LORD...
TELL ME SOMETHING ENTERTAINING, FLOKI.
I'M VERY BORED.



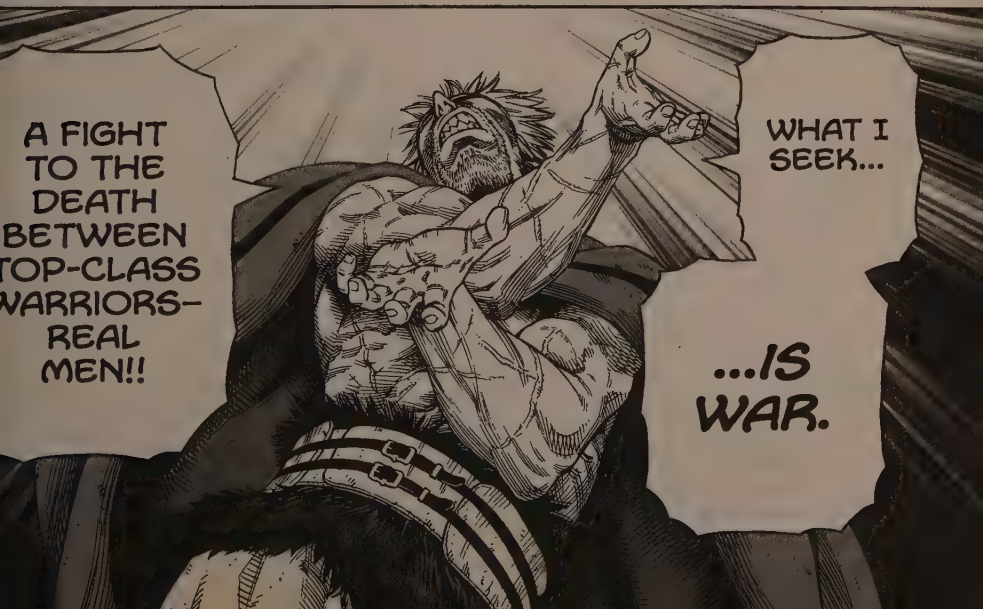


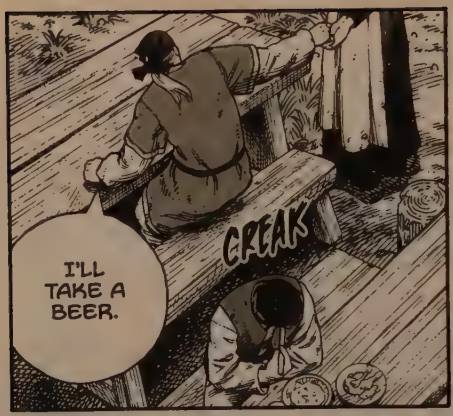
THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT YOU ARE THE STRONG-EST WARRIOR OF OUR AGE.

TELL ME SOME-THING ENTER-TAINING.
SO WITH THAT IN MIND! I COMMAND YOU AGAIN FLOKI...
IF YOU CAME ALL THIS WAY JUST TO SAY HELLO, I'LL USE YOU FOR MY NEXT BEAR.
AS A MATTER OF FACT...I DO HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU.
SOMETHING VERY NICE INDEED...

I'VE NO USE FOR THAT PLACE ANY LONGER. IT'S WHY I RETURNED TO DENMARK.
THAT ARSE-WIPE CANUTE BROUGHT PEACE TO ENGLAND AND SUCKED ALL THE FUN OUT OF IT.

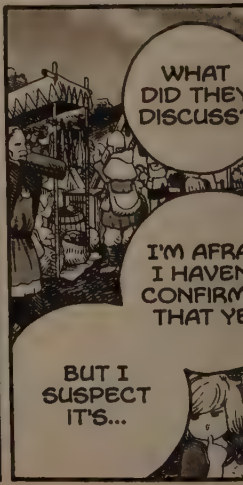
NEVER ONCE DID I SAY I WANTED ANY DAMN LAND!!
YOU DID THIS WITH-OUT HIS MAJESTY'S SAY-SO?
I DARESAY HE WILL CONFISCATE YOUR LANDS IN ENGLAND.

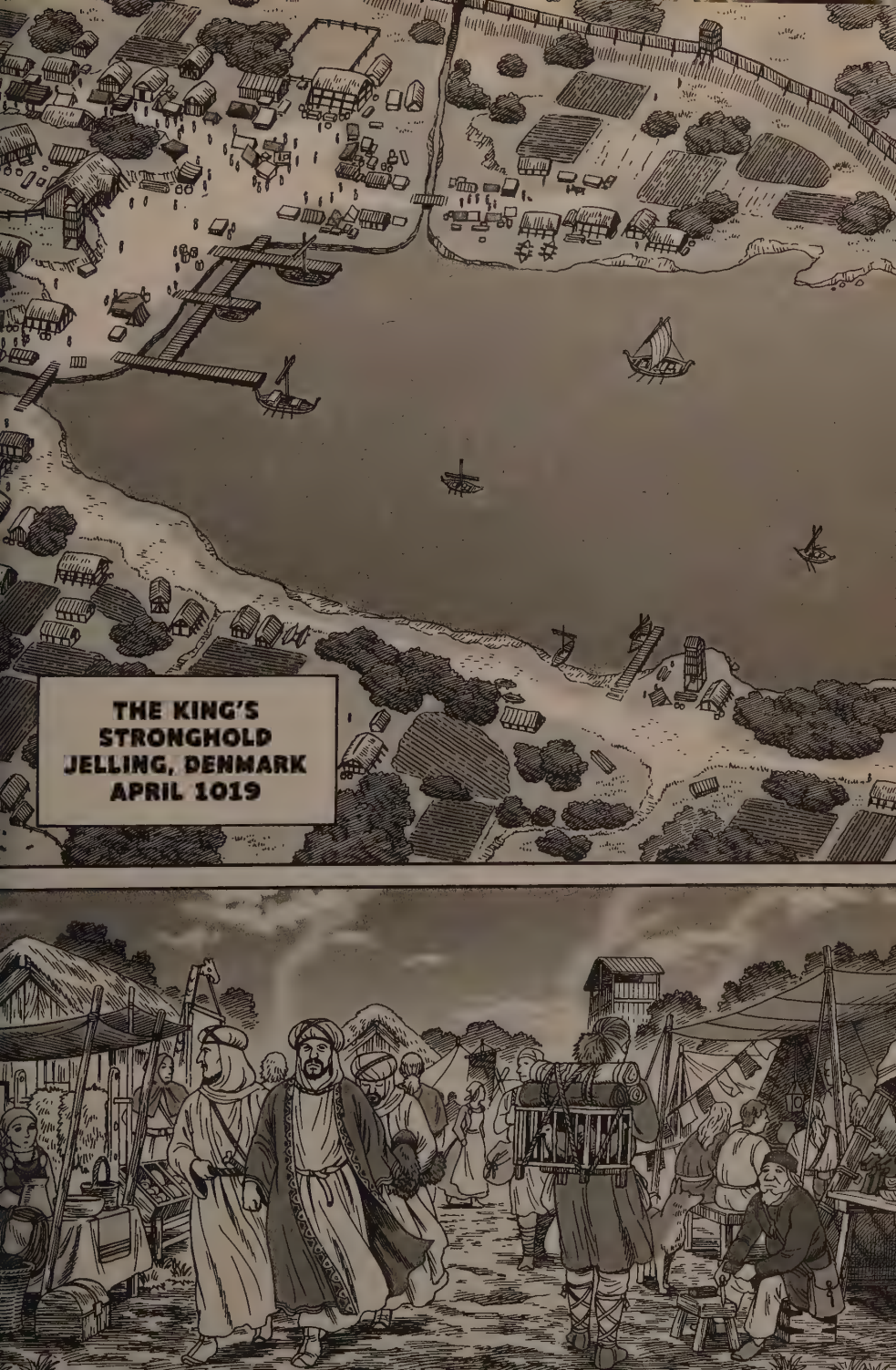

A FIGHT TO THE DEATH BETWEEN TOP-CLASS WARRIORS– REAL MEN!!
WHAT I SEEK...
...IS WAR.

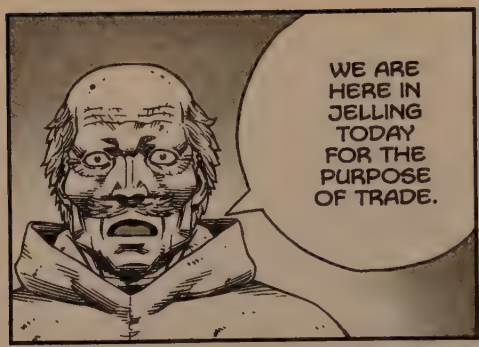

I'LL TAKE A BEER.
CREAK

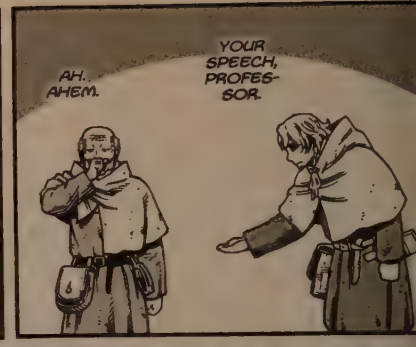
BEFORE NOON TODAY.
FLOKI MET WITH GENERAL THORKELL.
...WHAT'S THE STORY?

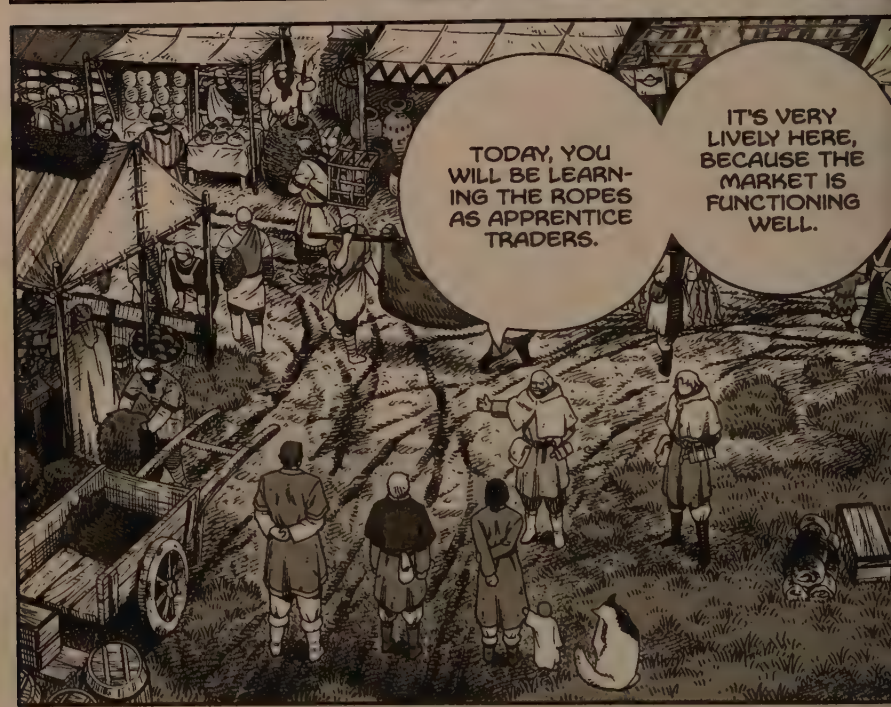
AND VAGN'S ORDERS ?
NO DOUBT.
HE PLANS TO RECRUIT HIM TO HIS CAUSE.


WHAT DID THEY DISCUSS
I'M AFRA I HAVEN CONFIRM THAT YE
BUT I SUSPECT IT'S...


THE KING'S
STRONGHOLD
JELLING, DENMARK
APRIL 1019


WE ARE HERE IN JELLING TODAY FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRADE.

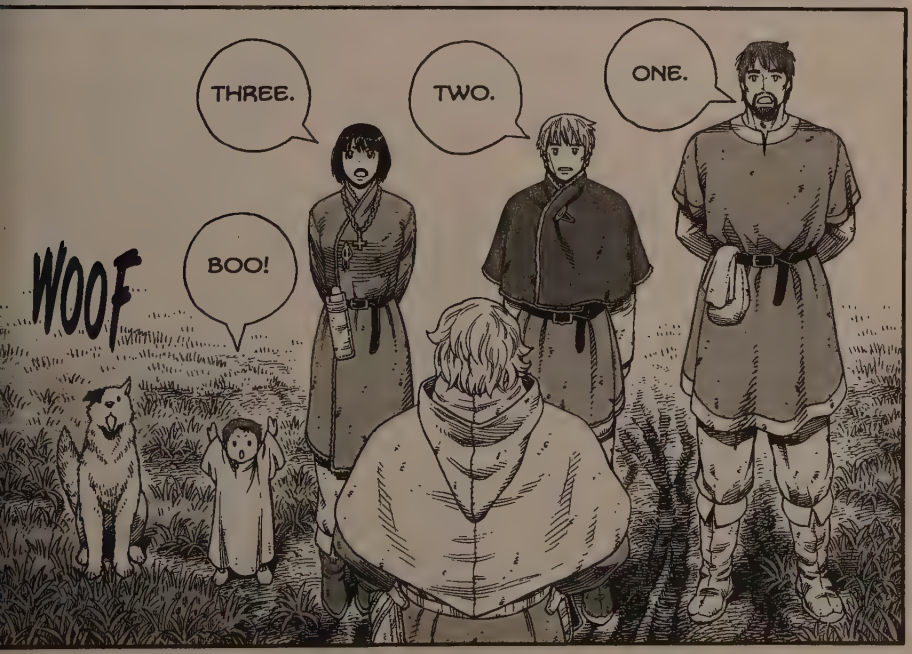

AH. AHEM.
YOUR SPEECH, PROFES-SOR.


TODAY, YOU WILL BE LEARN-ING THE ROPES AS APPRENTICE TRADERS.
IT'S VERY LIVELY HERE, BECAUSE THE MARKET IS FUNCTIONING WELL.

THOSE ARE OUR GOODS.
SEAL PELTS FROM GREENLAND, ONE FOR EACH OF YOU.

GOT IT. WILL DO.
NONE YET.
TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY TALKED ABOUT, IN DETAIL.
THUNK

LINE UP!
SOUND OFF!


THREE.
TWO.
ONE.
BOO!
WOOF

THE PEOPLE!

IT'S AMAZING! LIKE THE "THING" IN ICELAND.
ONLY THIS IS TEN TIMES BETTER!

THE GOODS!

HUH? SHE WAS JUST HERE...
DID SHE GET LOST?
SAY, WHERE'S HILD?

BUT I HAVE A WARNING.
I'LL NEED YOU TO TRADE THESE PELTS FOR RATIONS THAT WILL LAST US OVER THE VOYAGE.
ON THE OTHER HAND, DON'T TRY TO GRAB TOO MUCH, YOURSELVES.
YOUR TRADING PARTNERS WILL SEEK TO SQUEEZE AS MUCH PROFIT FROM YOU AS THEY CAN.
DO NOT SIMPLY ACCEPT THEIR INITIAL OFFERS.
YES, SIR!
IF YOU RUIN YOUR PARTNER, THEY MAY NURSE A GRUDGE, AND THAT ENMITY WILL COME BACK AROUND TO YOU.
THE IDEA IS TO FIND THE *PROPER* PRICE THAT ENRICHES BOTH THE BUYER AND THE SELLER. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

YOU KNOW THEM?
I MIGHT.
HA-HA-HA
I HAVE A FEELING THAT NOTHING GOOD WILL COME...
...OF RUNNING INTO ANY OF THE PEOPLE FROM MY PAST.
SOMEONE YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE?
NOPE...

SHE'LL BE KEEPING AN EYE ON ME.
SHE'S AROUND.
VERY CLOSE, I BET.
REALLY? I WISH WE COULD SHOP TOGETHER.
I'D LOVE TO GET TO KNOW HILD BETTER.
GYA-HA-HA-HA
WH-WHY ARE YOU HIDING?
WAIT, WHAT'S THIS?
I HATE BEING ON SUCH TERSE TERMS WITH A FELLOW PASSENGER...
SNEAK SNEAK SNEAK

I DON'T EVEN HAVE... THE ENERGY TO TELL YOU OFF ANY-MORE.

EVEN AS *SLAVES*, YOU'LL NEVER BE MORE THAN LACKADAISICAL LUMPS...

MEANWHILE, A PERSON FROM THE PRESENT

EXACTLY.

WE'RE ALL LUCKY TO BE ALIVE.

CHEER UP, SIGGY.

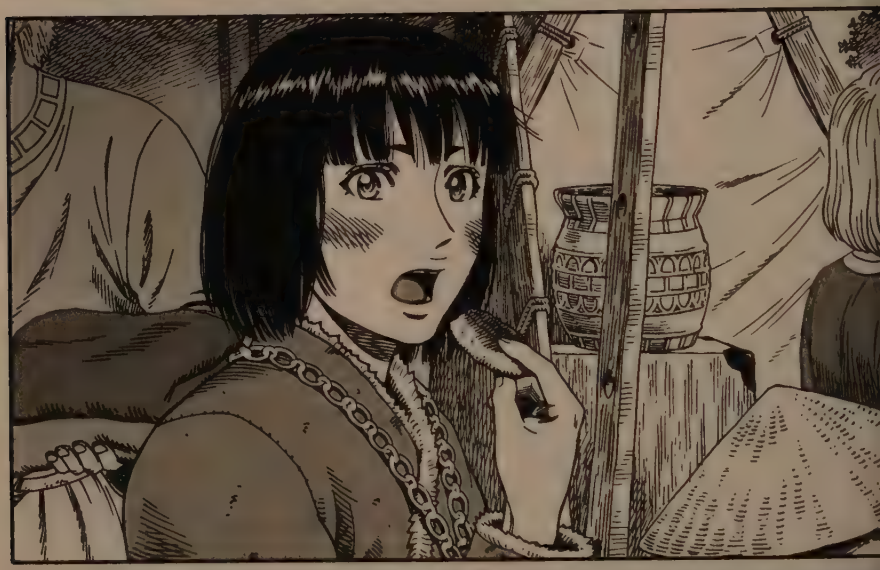
...

SURREN-DER WAS THE RIGHT CHOICE.

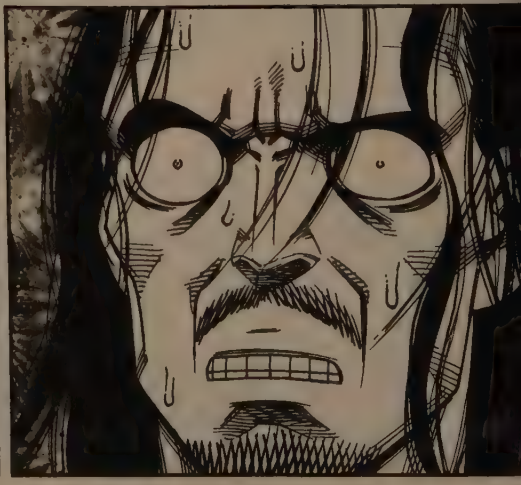
NO WINNING THAT FIGHT.

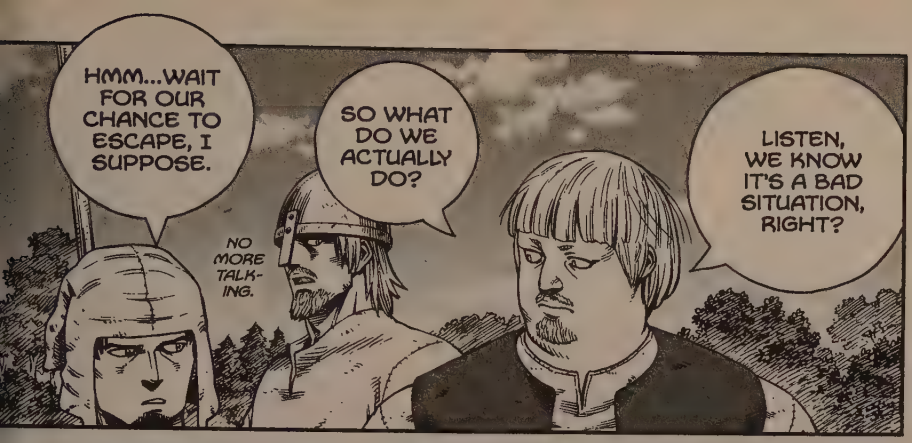
WHEW, THOSE PIRATES WERE TOUGH, THOUGH.

THEY JUST MAKE 'EM BIGGER AND MEANER ON THE MAIN-LAND.

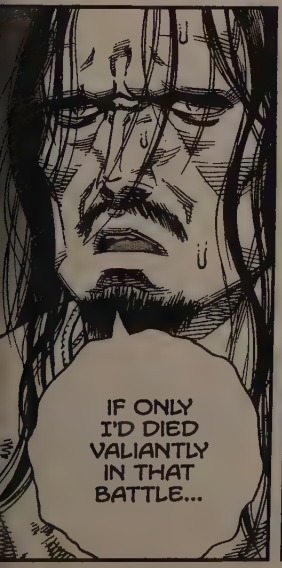


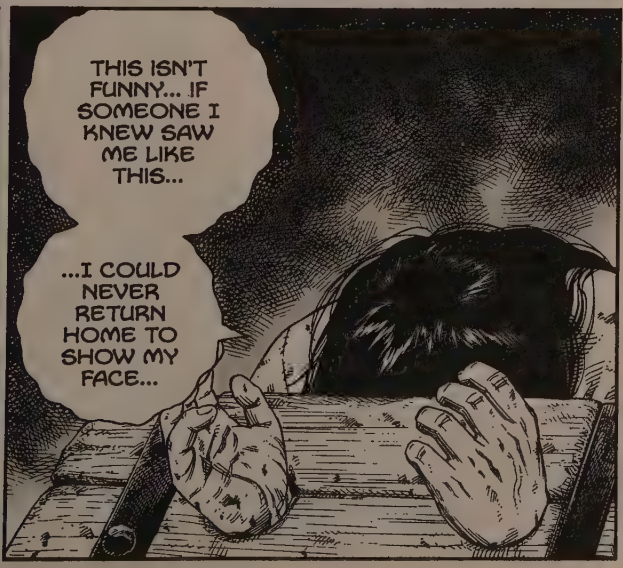
HMM
?!

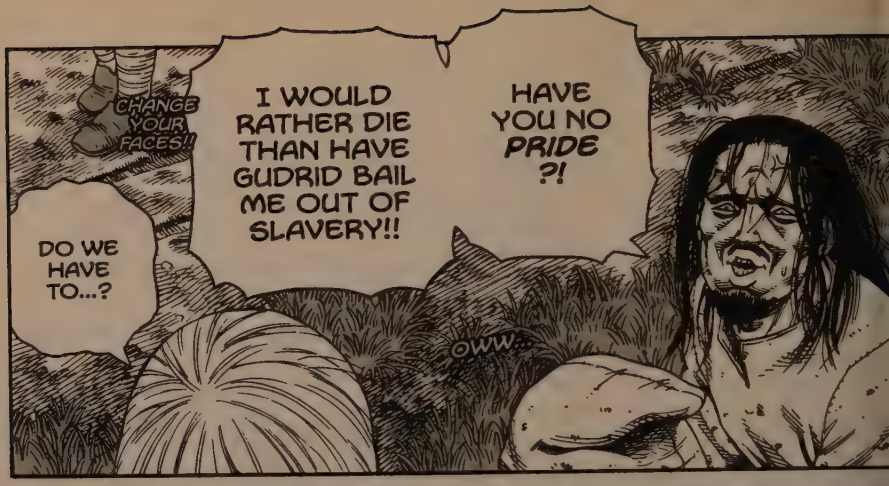


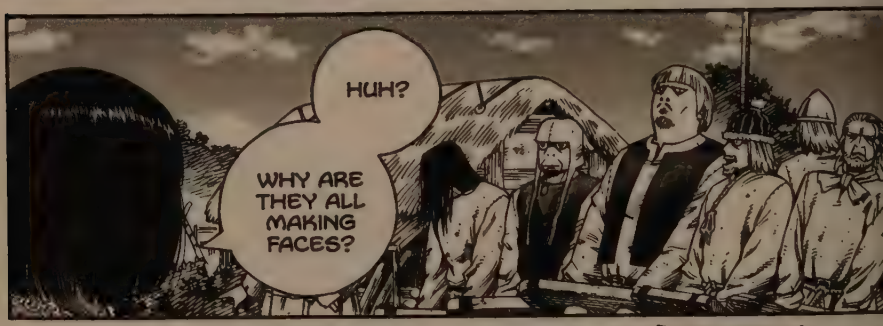

HMM...WAIT FOR OUR CHANCE TO ESCAPE, I SUPPOSE.
SO WHAT DO WE ACTUALLY DO?
NO MORE TALKING.
LISTEN, WE KNOW IT'S A BAD SITUATION, RIGHT?

HA HA HA
LOOK, LIFE'S NOT THAT CONVENIENT.
BUT LOOK AT ALL THE PEOPLE.
MAYBE SOMEONE WE KNOW WILL STROLL ALONG AND BUY US.


IF ONLY I'D DIED VALIANTLY IN THAT BATTLE...


THIS ISN'T FUNNY... IF SOMEONE I KNEW SAW ME LIKE THIS...
...I COULD NEVER RETURN HOME TO SHOW MY FACE...


CHANGE YOUR FACES!!
DO WE HAVE TO...?
I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN HAVE GUDRID BAIL ME OUT OF SLAVERY!!
HAVE YOU NO PRIDE ?!
OWW...


HUH?
WHY ARE THEY ALL MAKING FACES?

?!

WHAT?
COME OVER HERE!!

THOR-FINN!! EINAR!!

HMMM ...?
NO, YOU FOOL!!
GONK
HEY! GUD...
IT IS!
OH!!
HEY! ISN'T THAT GUDRID?

THE ONES ALL LINED UP.
LOOK, OVER THERE.
WHO'S THE WHAT, NOW?
IT'S SIGURD...
IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
HEY.

THOR-FINN...?

THE HEIGHT IS RIGHT.

IS THAT THORFINN KARLSEFNI ...?

YOU THINK SO? HE LOOKS DIFFERENT TO ME.
I KNEW IT.
THE SIZE, HAIR COLOR, AND AGE ALL FIT.
YOU'RE THORFINN KARLSEFNI, AREN'T YOU?
I HEARD YOU WERE ENSLAVED, BUT YOU SEEM FINE TO ME.

CHAPTER 126: WAR IN THE BALTIC (2)

HILD !!
...THEY WORK FOR THOR-KELL...
LET IT PASS QUIET-LY!
IT'S ALL RIGHT! THERE'S NO HARM HERE!
SHE COULD BE THE MOST DANGER-OUS ELEMENT.
OH, RIGHT! GOOD IDEA...
HILD?

YOU HAVE THE WRONG MAN.

NOW, HANG ON JUST A MOMENT.

THIS IS A MIS-TAKE.

PLEASE EXCUSE ME; WE'RE IN A HURRY.

THAT WAS MY FAULT.

I YELLED HIS NAME OUT LOUD...

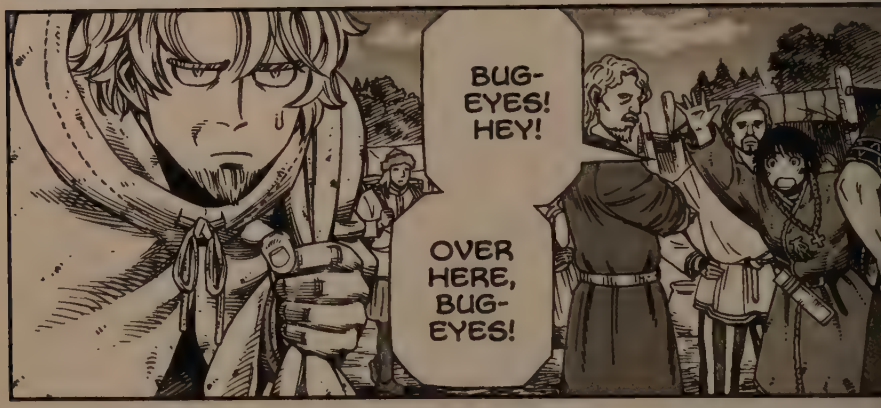
AH!

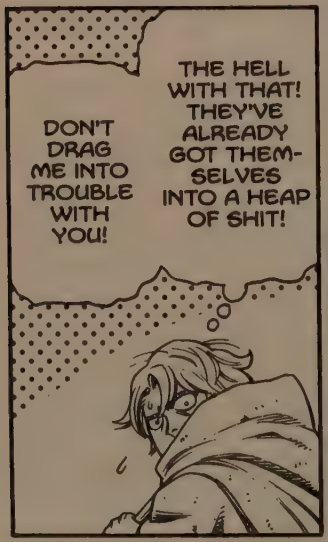
YOU AREN'T GOING TO IGNORE HIM AND LEAVE, ARE YOU?

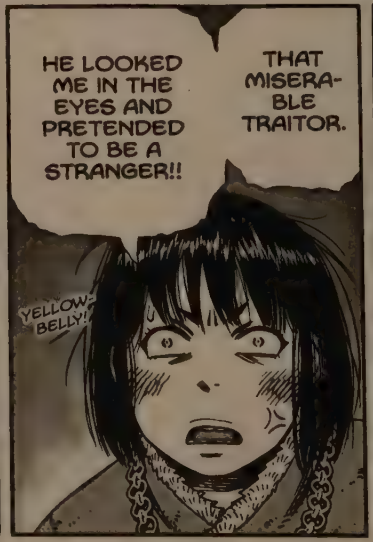
CAPTAIN THORKELL IS AT THE HOLD.

!

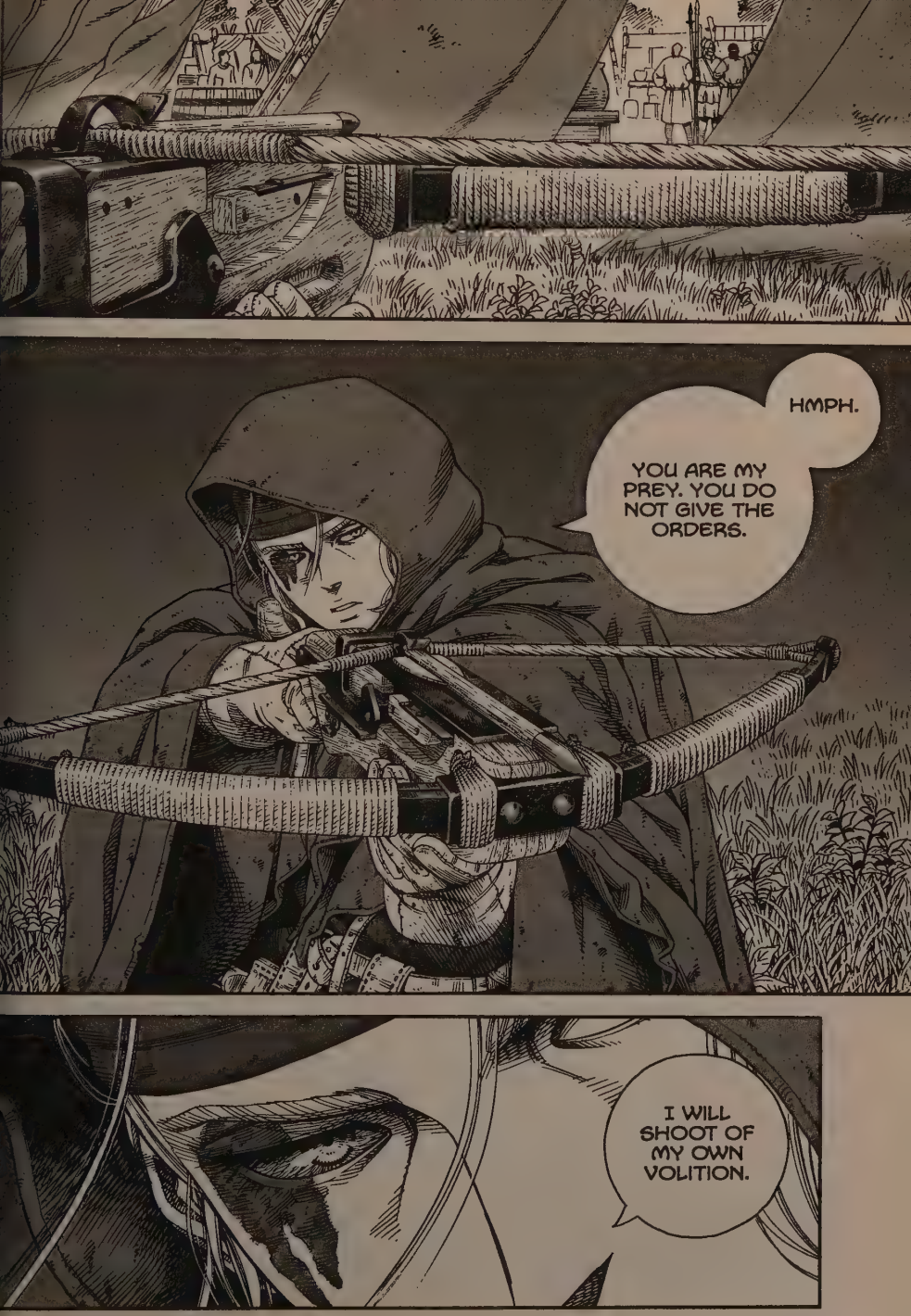
THIS IS ALL MY FAULT! BUT WHAT CAN I...
I'VE GOT TO DO SOME THING


BUG-EYES! HEY!
OVER HERE, BUG-EYES!

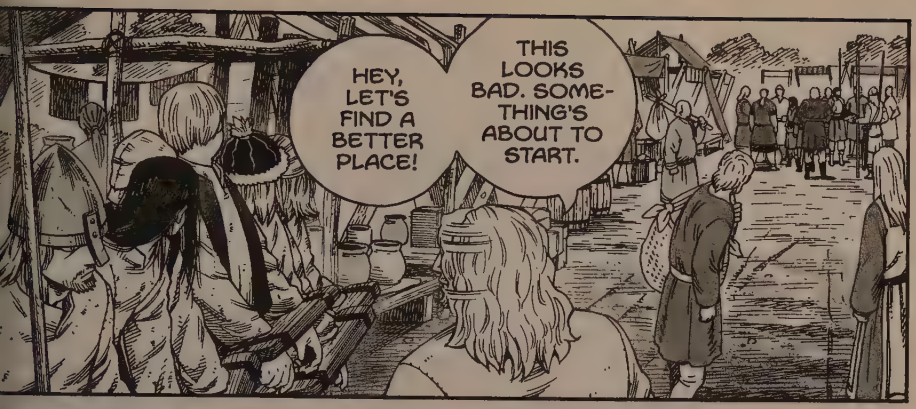

DON'T DRAG ME INTO TROUBLE WITH YOU!
THE HELL WITH THAT! THEY'VE ALREADY GOT THEM-SELVES INTO A HEAP OF SHIT!

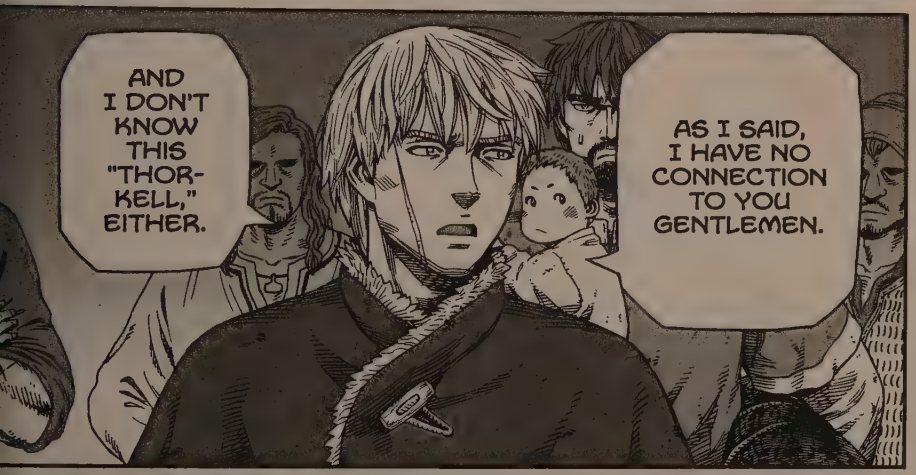

HE LOOKED ME IN THE EYES AND PRETENDED TO BE A STRANGER!!
THAT MISERA-BLE TRAITOR.
YELLOW-BELLY!

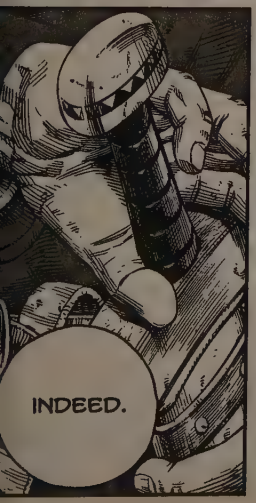
BUG...

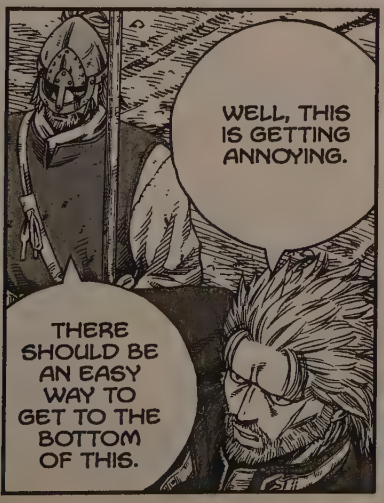

HMPH.
YOU ARE MY PREY. YOU DO NOT GIVE THE ORDERS.
I WILL SHOOT OF MY OWN VOLITION.

?!
IF YOU DIE, WE WERE WRONG.
LLSH...
IF YOU EVADE, YOU ARE THORFINN KARLSEFNI.
NO, YOU FOOL– DON'T!!


HEY, LET'S FIND A BETTER PLACE!
THIS LOOKS BAD. SOMETHING'S ABOUT TO START.


AND I DON'T KNOW THIS "THORKELL," EITHER.
AS I SAID, I HAVE NO CONNECTION TO YOU GENTLEMEN.


INDEED.


WELL, THIS IS GETTING ANNOYING.
THERE SHOULD BE AN EASY WAY TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.

STOP!! FINE, I ADMIT IT!!

I AM THOR-FINN KARL-SEFNI!!

BAM
THUK
THAT WAS A CROSS-BOW!!
FROM OVER THERE!! GET HIM!!
!!

ARE YOU HERE TO START A FIGHT WITH ME? I DON'T THINK SO.

I'LL MEET WITH THORKELL. SHOW ME THE WAY.

I NEED TO WRAP THIS UP.

OTHERWISE WE'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE MUCH SUCCESS WITH TRADING.

...

PLEASE DON'T INSIST ON COMING ALONG.

THE LESS YOU HAVE TO DO WITH THESE PEOPLE, THE BETTER.

JUST WATCH OVER KARLI.

I'LL JOIN YOU, THOR-FINN.

IF YOU INTENDED TO PROTECT MY LIFE, THEN DO NOT SHOOT AGAIN!

KILLING TWO OR THREE OF THEM WILL NOT FRIGHTEN THEM– JUST THE OPPOSITE!

HILD! THESE ARE NO ORDINARY THUGS!

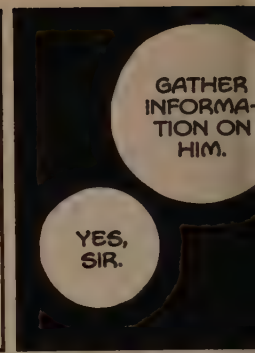
...

DON'T BOTHER YOURSELF WITH MY PEOPLE.

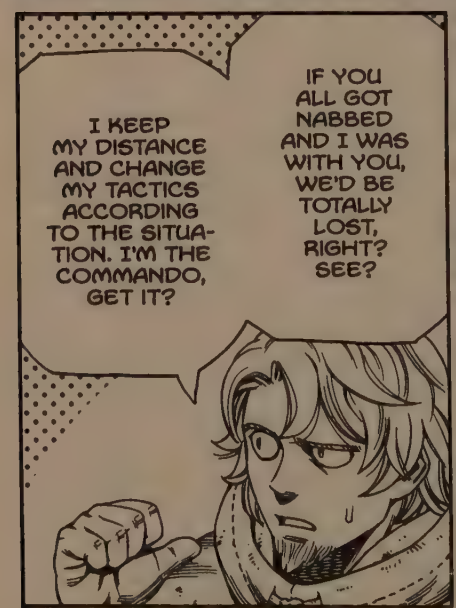
SHIT, THAT HURTS!

SOMEONE GO AND GET THAT BOWMAN!

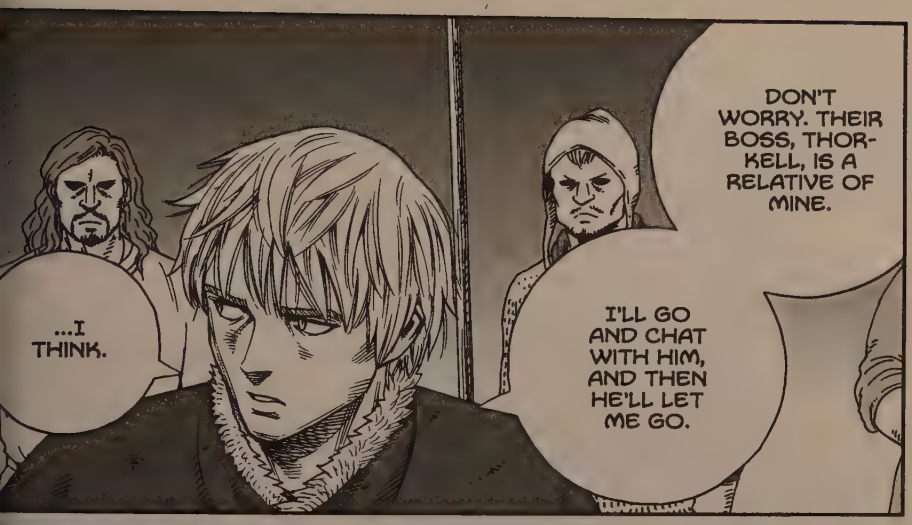
I HOPE HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT...

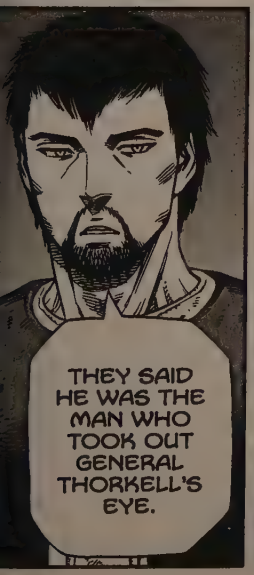

GATHER INFORMATION ON HIM.
YES, SIR.

WHY WOULDN'T HE?
HE'S JUST MEETING A RELATIVE, RIGHT?

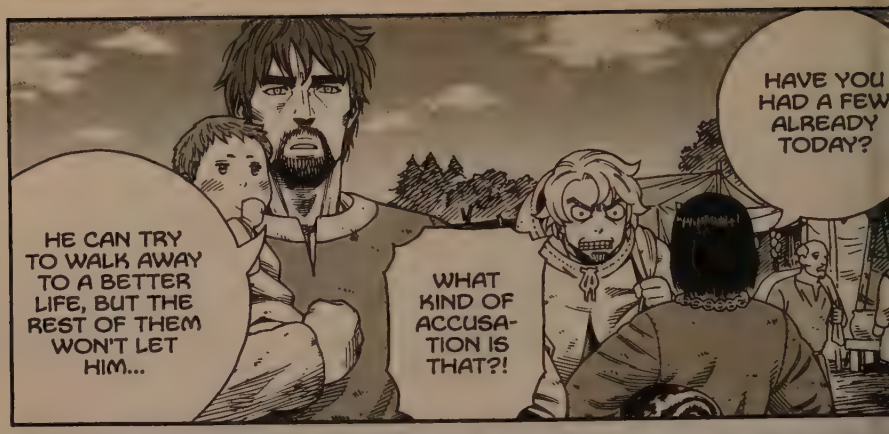

I KEEP MY DISTANCE AND CHANGE MY TACTICS ACCORDING TO THE SITUATION. I'M THE COMMANDO, GET IT?
IF YOU ALL GOT NABBED AND I WAS WITH YOU, WE'D BE TOTALLY LOST, RIGHT? SEE?

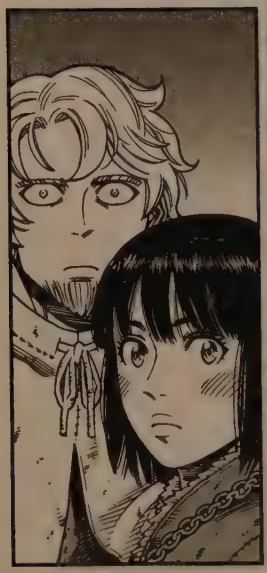
LISTEN, I'VE LEARNED NOT TO BE SHOCKED BY WHAT YOU DO, BU THIS TIME I JUST...
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO IN THAT SITUATION?! ALL ON MY OWN!
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT, STUPID! THINK ABOUT IT!!

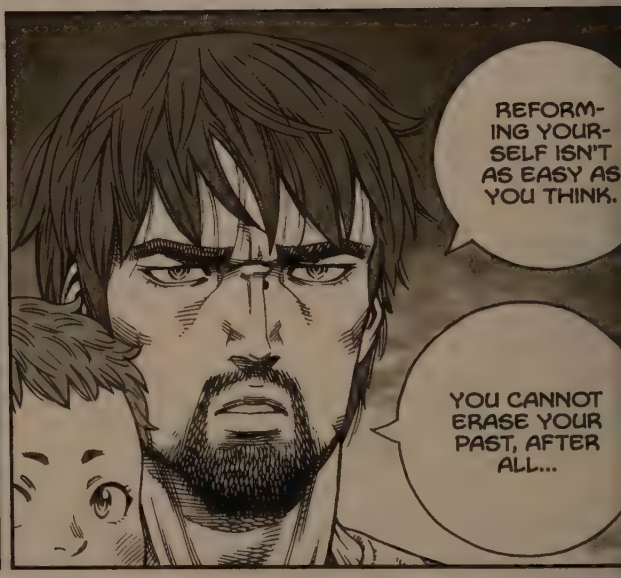

...I THINK.
DON'T WORRY. THEIR BOSS, THORKELL, IS A RELATIVE OF MINE.
I'LL GO AND CHAT WITH HIM, AND THEN HE'LL LET ME GO.


THEY SAID HE WAS THE MAN WHO TOOK OUT GENERAL THORKELL'S EYE.

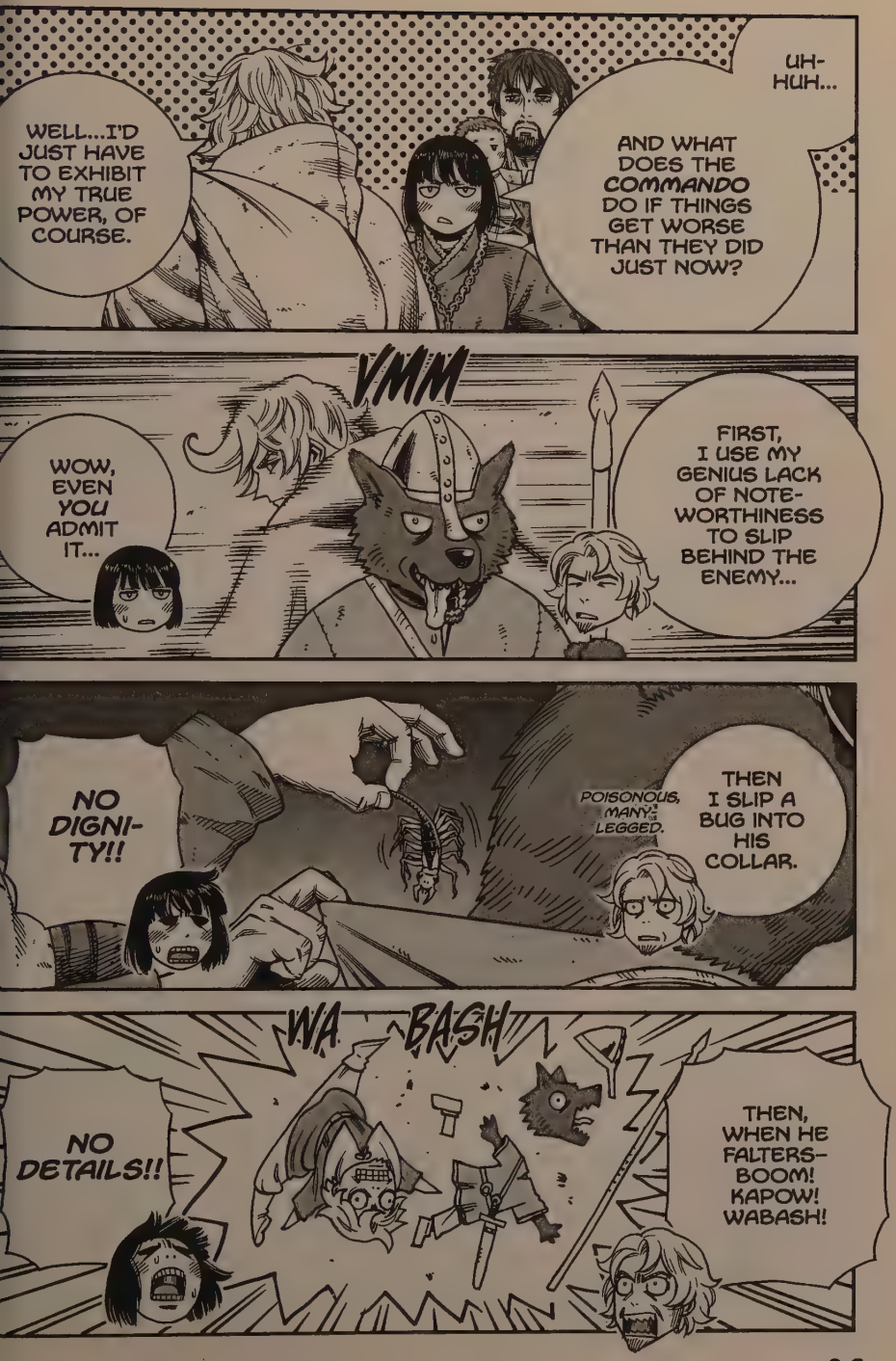
YES.
I HEARD HIS NAME WHEN I SERVED IN ENGLAND.
THORFINN KARLSEFNI...
DO YOU KNOW HIM?


HE CAN TRY TO WALK AWAY TO A BETTER LIFE, BUT THE REST OF THEM WON'T LET HIM...
WHAT KIND OF ACCUSATION IS THAT?!
HAVE YOU HAD A FEW ALREADY TODAY?

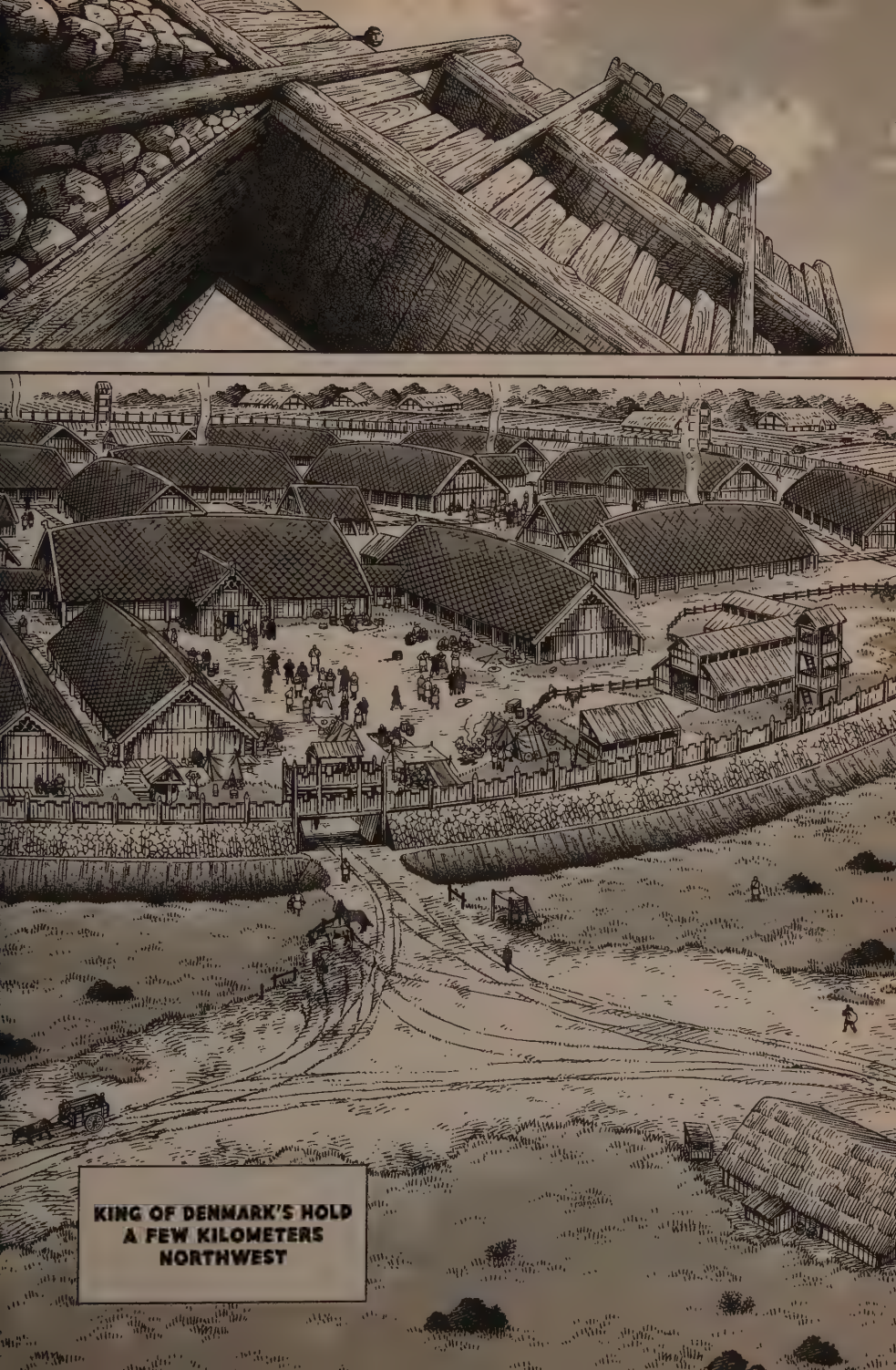


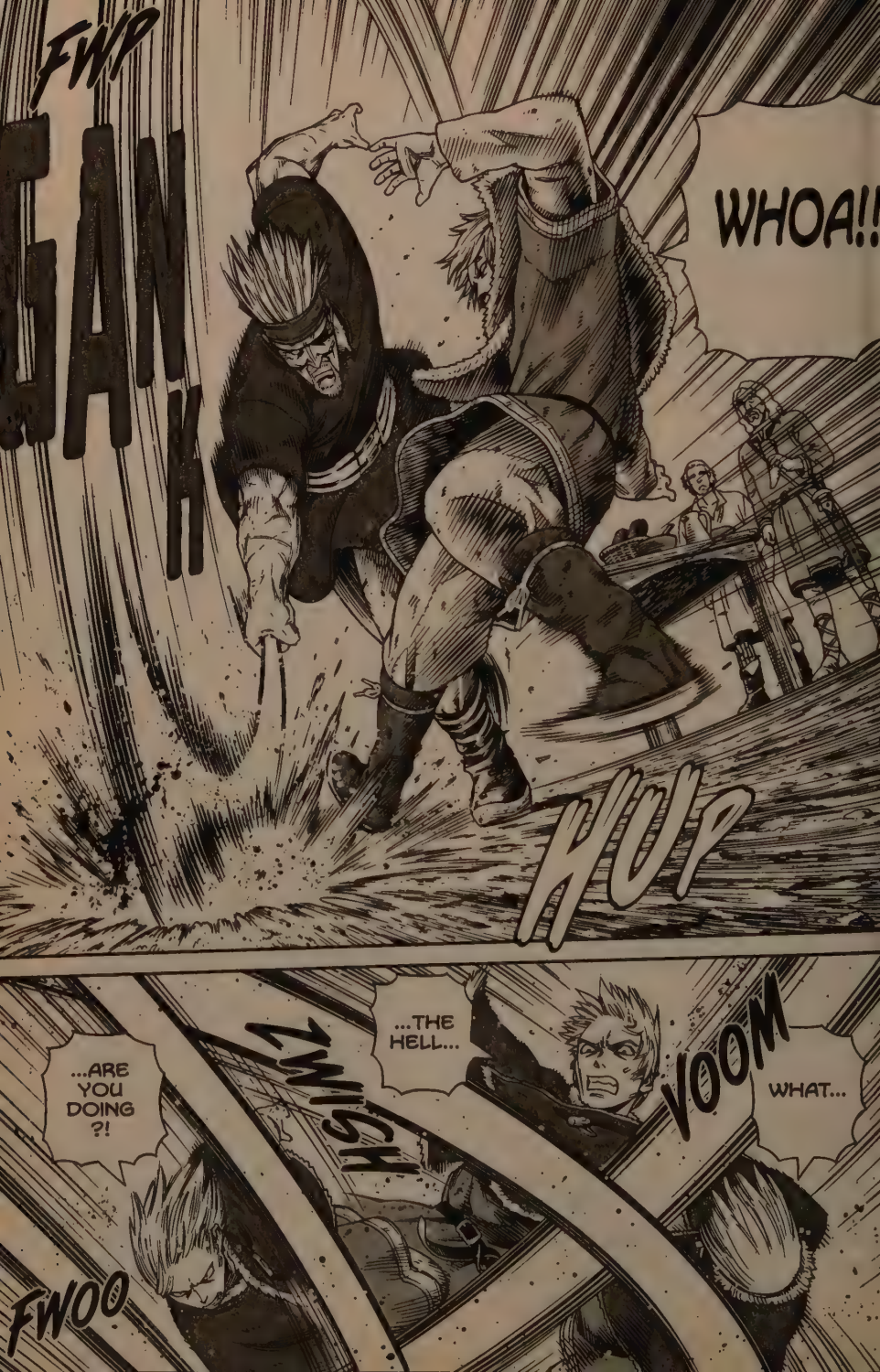

REFORMING YOURSELF ISN'T AS EASY AS YOU THINK.
YOU CANNOT ERASE YOUR PAST, AFTER ALL...

YOU ARE *REALLY* DEDICATED TO YOUR WAY OF LIFE!
SORRY, I JUST REMEMBERED ALL THE THINGS I NEED TO BUY.
WE'LL GO AND CHECK IT OUT IF HE TAKES TOO LONG.
THEY MENTIONE A HOLD, RIGHT?

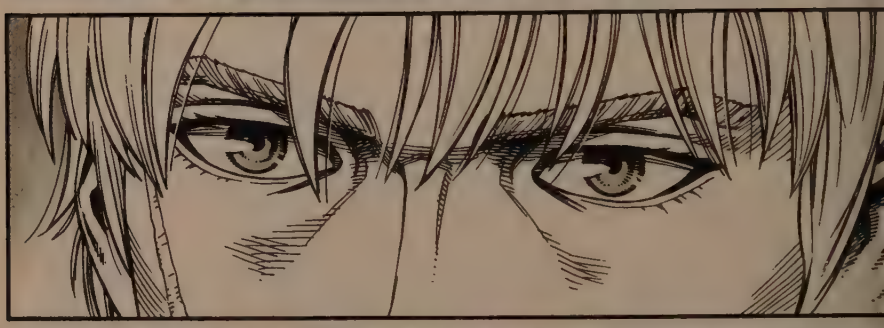

WELL...I'D JUST HAVE TO EXHIBIT MY TRUE POWER, OF COURSE.
UH-HUH...
AND WHAT DOES THE COMMANDO DO IF THINGS GET WORSE THAN THEY DID JUST NOW?
VMM
WOW, EVEN YOU ADMIT IT...
FIRST, I USE MY GENIUS LACK OF NOTE-WORTHINESS TO SLIP BEHIND THE ENEMY...
NO DIGNI-TY!!
POISONOUS, MANY-LEGGED.
THEN I SLIP A BUG INTO HIS COLLAR.
WA
BASH
NO DETAILS!!
THEN, WHEN HE FALTERS-BOOM! KAPOW! WABASH!

IT'S THORFINN KARLSEFNI. YOU REMEMBER HIM, FINNBOGI.
WHO'S THAT? NEW GUY?
LOOKS TINY.
OHHH!! THE ONE WHO FOUGHT AGAINST THE CAPTAIN IN ENGLAND!
KARL...

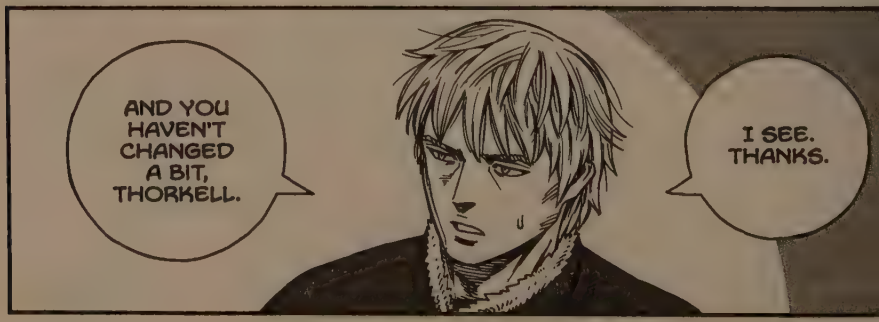

KING OF DENMARK'S HOLD
A FEW KILOMETERS
NORTHWEST


FWP
GANK
WHOA!!
HUP
...ARE YOU DOING ?!
ZWISH
...THE HELL...
VOOM
WHAT...
FWOO

HA HA HA
MURMUR
MURMUR
OH, FROM BACK THEN!
I REMEMBER THAT DUEL!
HEY! IT'S BEEN A WHILE!
FIGHT ME TOO, THORFINN!
FIVE YEARS LATER, AND HE'S STILL A RUNT.
LET HIM PASS, HE'S A GUEST.
THORFINN?!
GRAB



AHH... YOU'VE CHANGED.
YOUR EYES LOOK MORE LIKE THORS' NOW.


AND YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT, THORKELL.
I SEE. THANKS.

IT IS YOU, THORFINN!

YOU DODGED!

THANK YOU FOR COMING!

I'LL KILL YOU, YOU HUGE BASTARD!!

HA HA HA HA!

...

LOOK RIGHT AT ME.

THORFINN.

?

GOOD GRIEF.

LIKE HENCH-MEN, LIKE BOSS.

DOES THAT BLOW YOUR MIND, FLOKI?

THE SON OF THORS, "TROLL OF JOM," AND MY NIECE, HELGA.

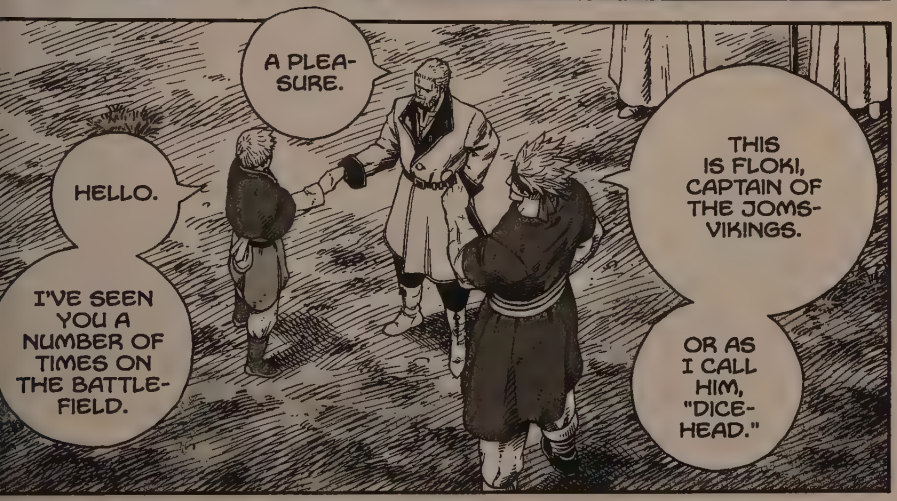
WOW.

BLEW IT HARDER THAN I FIGURED.

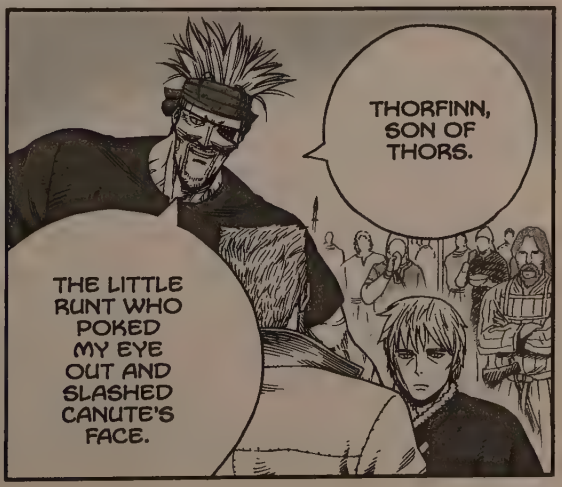
WOBBL

...?

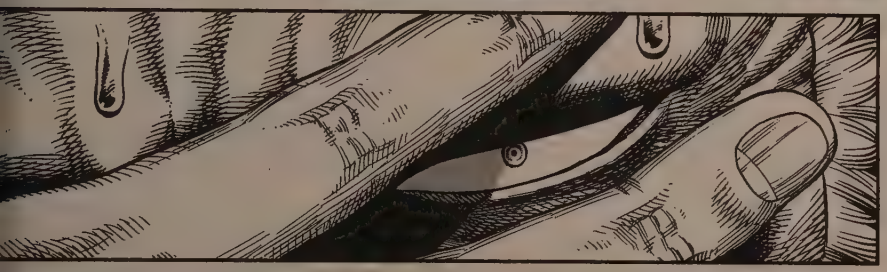
MIGHT I HAVE AN INTRODUCTION?
AN OLD WAR FRIEND?


A PLEASURE.
HELLO.
THIS IS FLOKI, CAPTAIN OF THE JOMSVIKINGS.
I'VE SEEN YOU A NUMBER OF TIMES ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
OR AS I CALL HIM, "DICEHEAD."

THORS...
YUP. THE VERY SAME.


THORFINN, SON OF THORS.
THE LITTLE RUNT WHO POKED MY EYE OUT AND SLASHED CANUTE'S FACE.

VINLAND SAGA

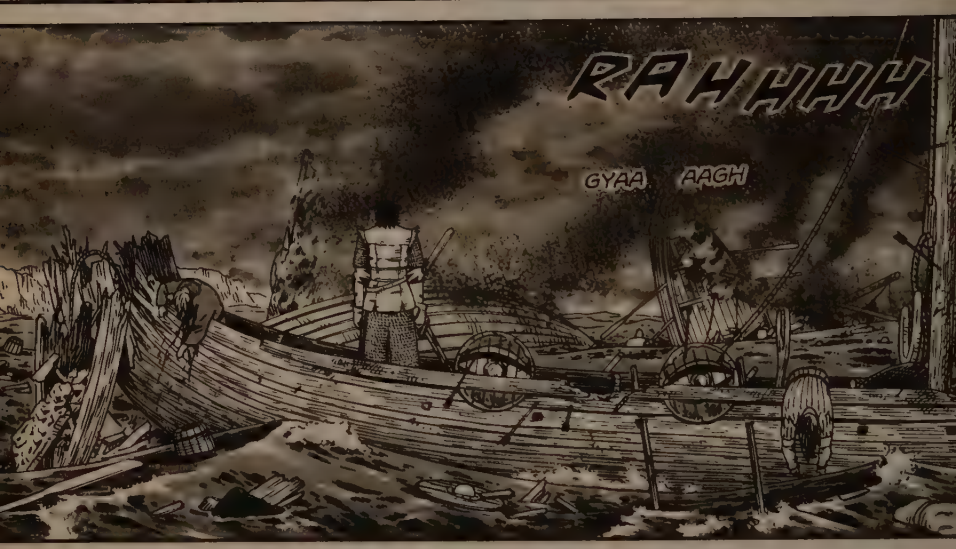


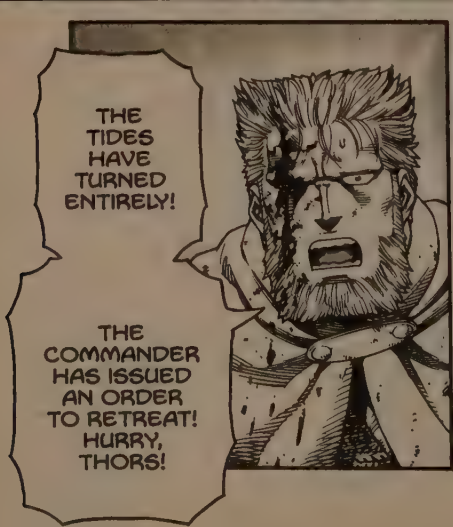
THE SON OF THORS ...?!

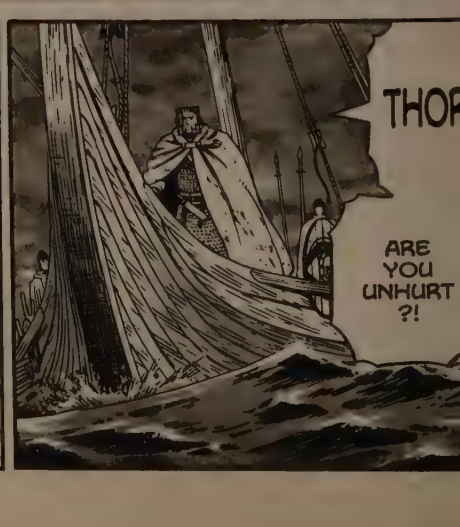
THOR-FINN...

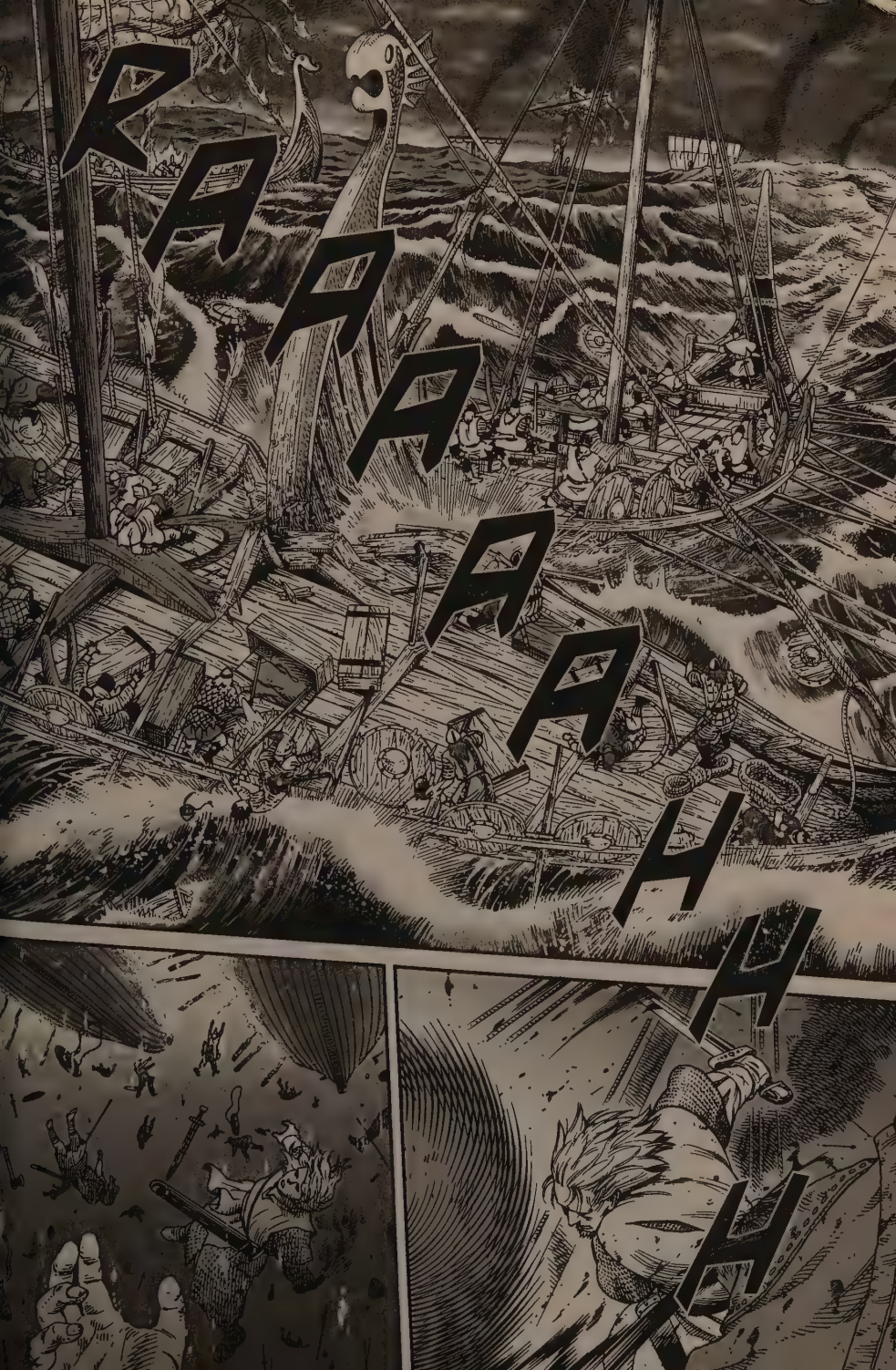
CHAPTER 127: WAR IN THE BALTIC (3)

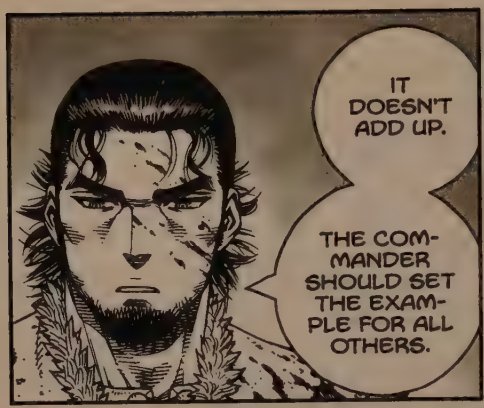
RA AAHHH

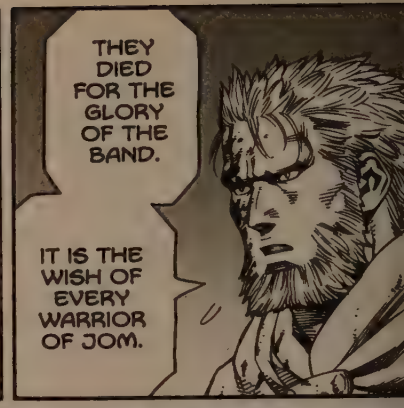

RAHHHH
GYAA AAGH

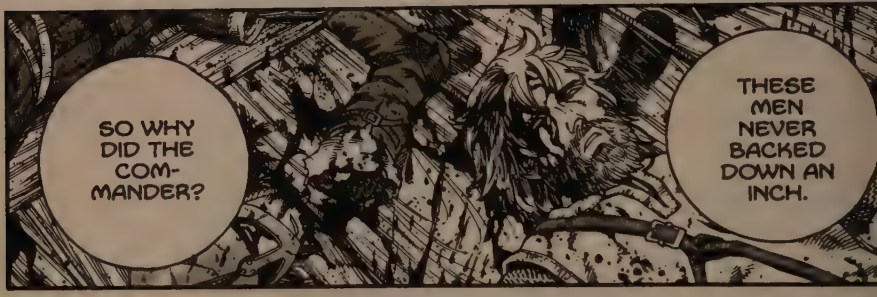

THE TIDES HAVE TURNED ENTIRELY!
THE COMMANDER HAS ISSUED AN ORDER TO RETREAT! HURRY, THORS!


THOR
ARE YOU UNHURT ?!

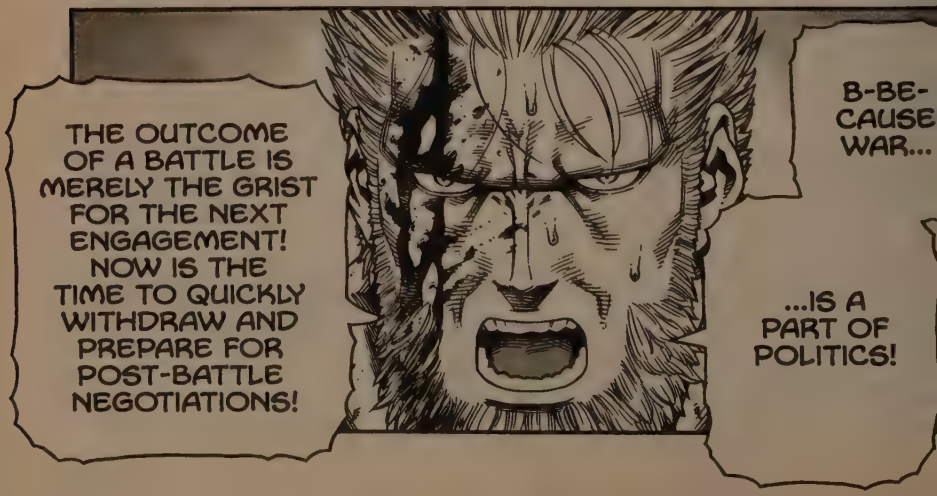

RAAAAAHHH


IT DOESN'T ADD UP.
THE COMMANDER SHOULD SET THE EXAMPLE FOR ALL OTHERS.

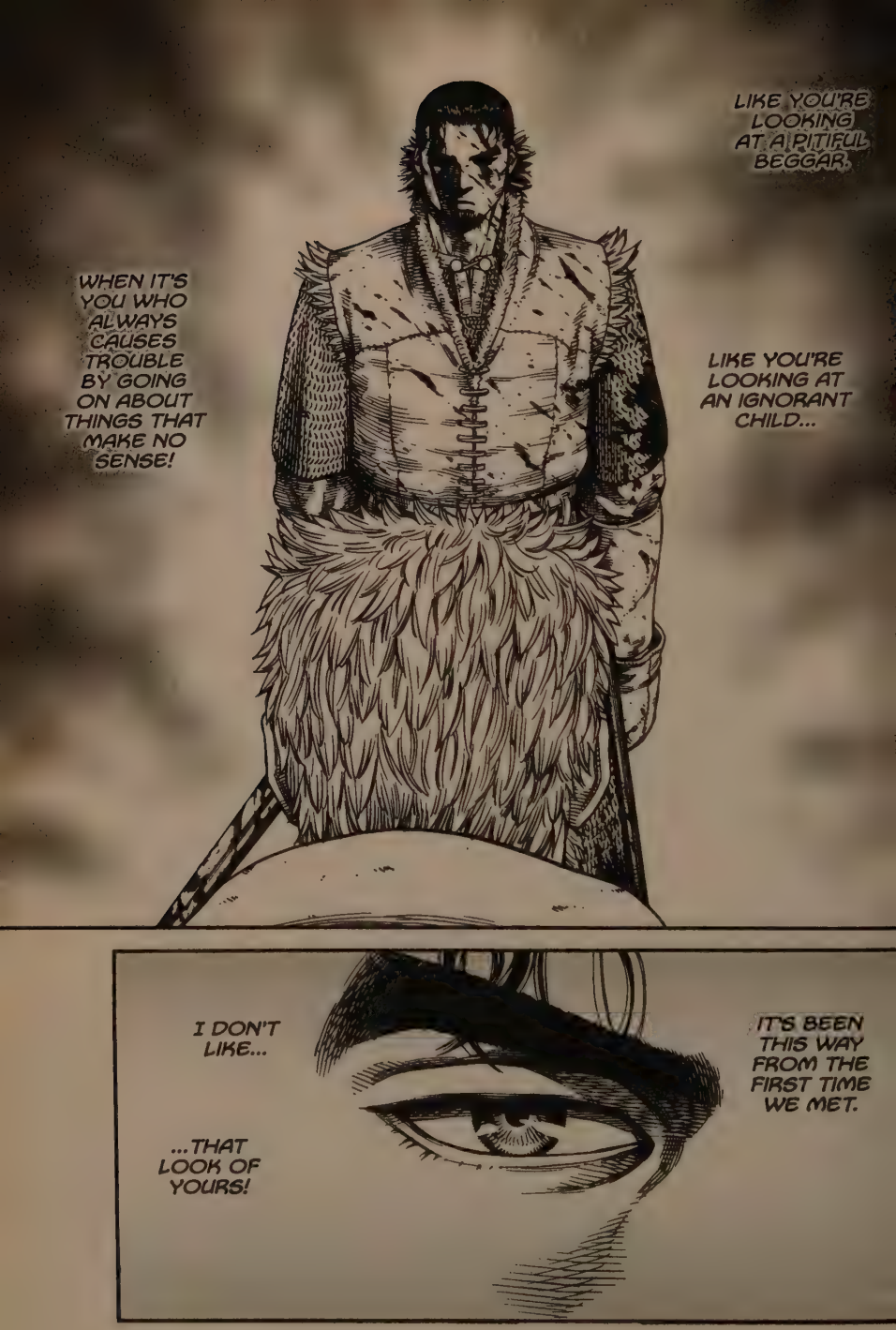

THEY DIED FOR THE GLORY OF THE BAND.
IT IS THE WISH OF EVERY WARRIOR OF JOM.

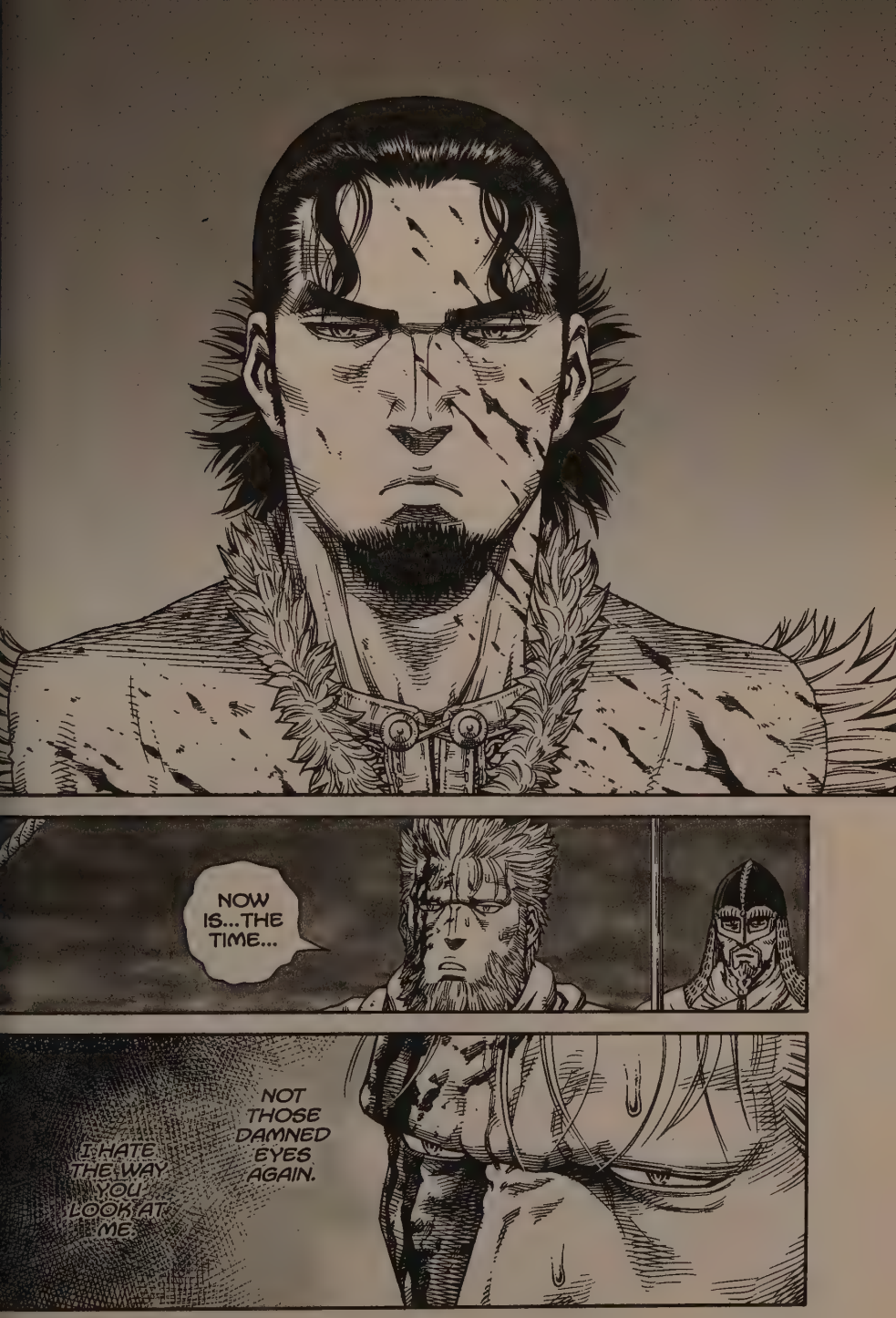

SO WHY DID THE COMMANDER?
THESE MEN NEVER BACKED DOWN AN INCH.

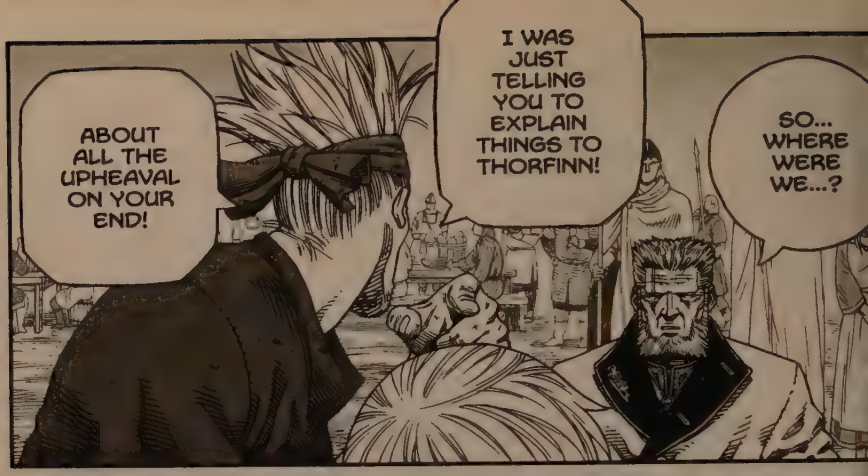
BE...


THE OUTCOME OF A BATTLE IS MERELY THE GRIST FOR THE NEXT ENGAGEMENT! NOW IS THE TIME TO QUICKLY WITHDRAW AND PREPARE FOR POST-BATTLE NEGOTIATIONS!
B-BECAUSE WAR...
...IS A PART OF POLITICS!

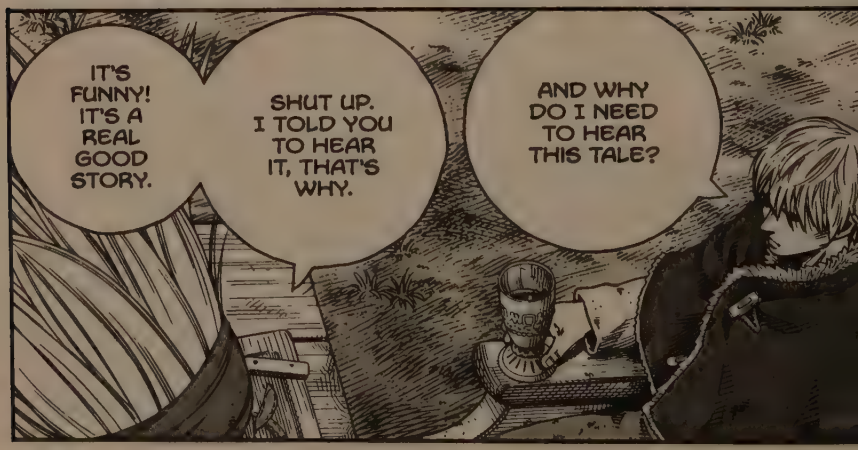
I THOUGHT RUNNING FROM THE ENEMY MERITED EXECUTION.
LOOK AT MY SHIP, FLOKI.
IT IS A STRATEGIC MOVE! WE MUST WITHDRAW AND RECOVER...
N-NOT IF THE COMMANDER GIVES THE ORDER!
IT IS A MESS.
THEY KNEW FULL WELL THAT VALHALLA BECKONED TO THEM.
ALL MY MEN DIED WITH THE NAME OF ODIN ON THEIR LIPS.


LIKE YOU'RE LOOKING AT A PITIFUL BEGGAR.
WHEN IT'S YOU WHO ALWAYS CAUSES TROUBLE BY GOING ON ABOUT THINGS THAT MAKE NO SENSE!
LIKE YOU'RE LOOKING AT AN IGNORANT CHILD...
I DON'T LIKE...
...THAT LOOK OF YOURS!
IT'S BEEN THIS WAY FROM THE FIRST TIME WE MET.


NOW IS...THE TIME...
NOT THOSE DAMNED EYES AGAIN.
I HATE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT ME.

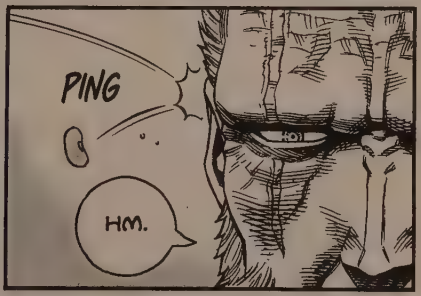

ABOUT ALL THE UPHEAVAL ON YOUR END!
I WAS JUST TELLING YOU TO EXPLAIN THINGS TO THORFINN!
SO... WHERE WERE WE...?

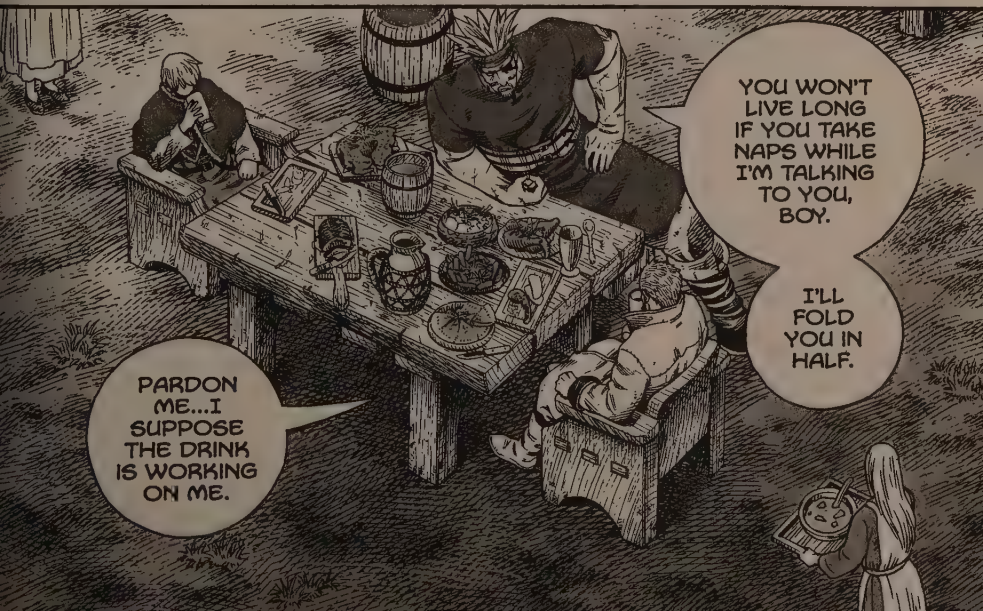
BUT HE SEEMS NOT TO BE AWARE THAT I WAS THE CHIEF ARCHITECT OF THORS' DEATH.
I WAS CAUGHT BY SURPRISE EARLIER.
THORFINN...


IT'S FUNNY! IT'S A REAL GOOD STORY.
SHUT UP. I TOLD YOU TO HEAR IT, THAT'S WHY.
AND WHY DO I NEED TO HEAR THIS TALE?

FLOKI.
HEY! DICE-HEAD!

AH:
YOU'RE AWAKE.


PING
HM.

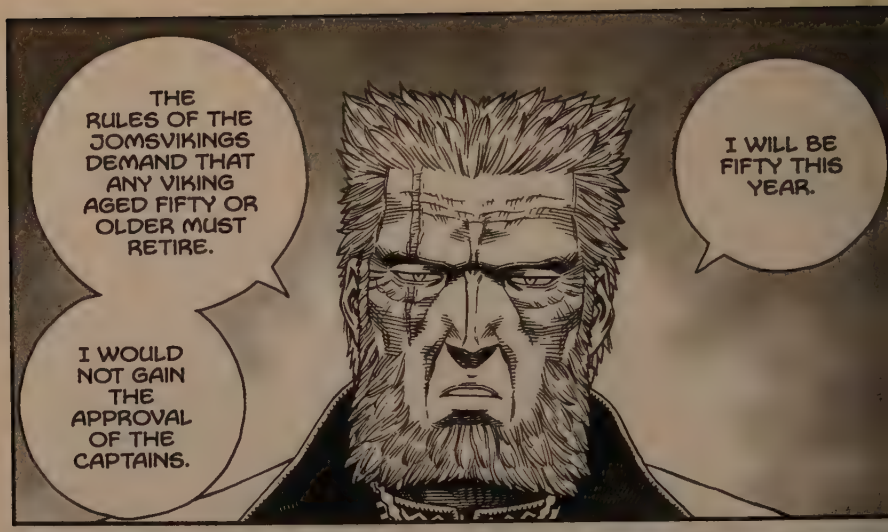

YOU WON'T LIVE LONG IF YOU TAKE NAPS WHILE I'M TALKING TO YOU, BOY.
I'LL FOLD YOU IN HALF.
PARDON ME...I SUPPOSE THE DRINK IS WORKING ON ME.

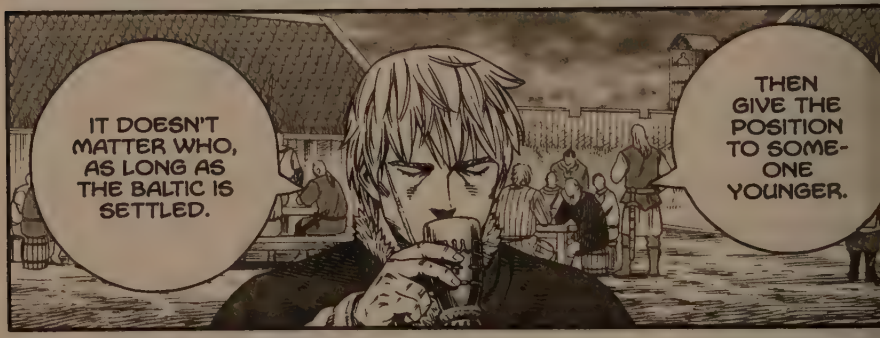
THE SEAT OF THE JOM CHIEFTAIN... OUR COMMANDER...

...IS CURRENTLY UNFILLED.

THE LAST CHIEFTAIN DIED SUDDENLY WITHOUT NAMING AN HEIR.

SHUT UP! I SAID TELL HIM, SO YOU TELL HIM!
WHAT'S WITH ALL THE SHIFTY ANSWERS, HUH?!
IT INVOLVES OUR MILITARY AFFAIRS.
I CANNOT SPEAK OF THEM TO ANY THIRD PARTY...
NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT.
JUST IGNORE HIM. I DON'T NEED TO KNOW.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, THORFINN CAN BE TRUSTED WITH SECRETS.
SPEAK.
...
A NUMBER OF MEMBERS HAVE FLOUTED THE PRECEPTS OF THE BAND.
...THE JOMSVIKINGS ARE FACED WITH A BIT OF A PREDICAMENT AT THE MOMENT.

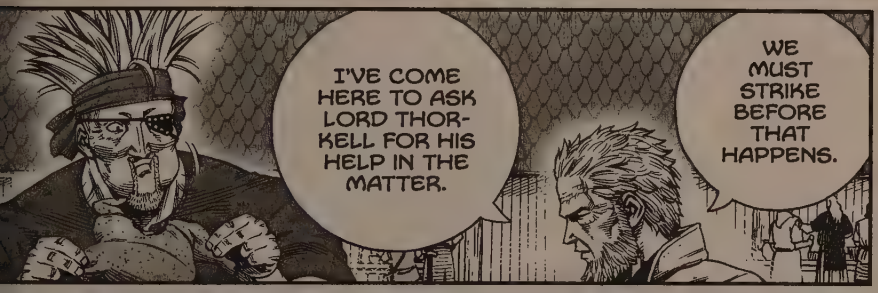

THE RULES OF THE JOMSVIKINGS DEMAND THAT ANY VIKING AGED FIFTY OR OLDER MUST RETIRE.
I WILL BE FIFTY THIS YEAR.
I WOULD NOT GAIN THE APPROVAL OF THE CAPTAINS.

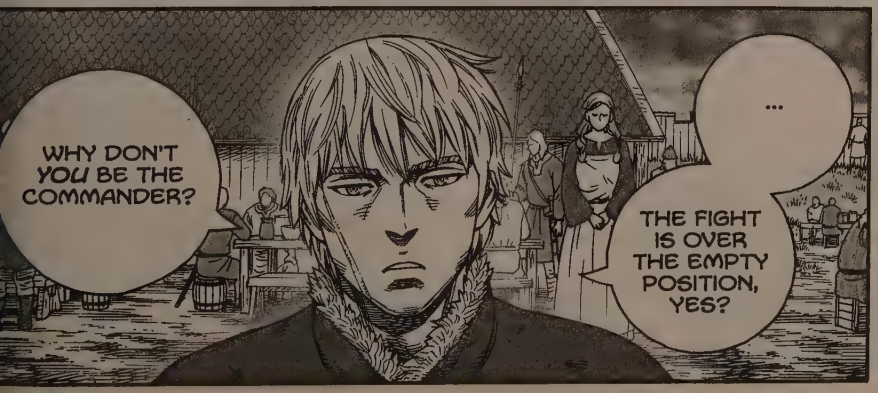

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO, AS LONG AS THE BALTIC IS SETTLED.
THEN GIVE THE POSITION TO SOME-ONE YOUNGER.

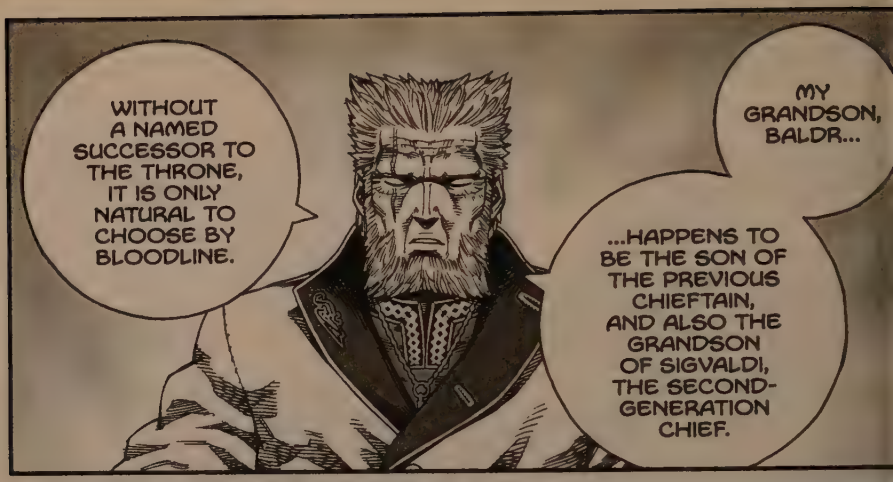
AGAIN, THE RULES STATE THAT NO MAN UNDER EIGHTEEN MAY JOIN. WE MUST WAIT FOR HIM TO GROW INTO AN ADULT.
THERE IS ONLY ONE CANDIDATE.
AND HE IS ONLY TEN YEARS OF AGE.

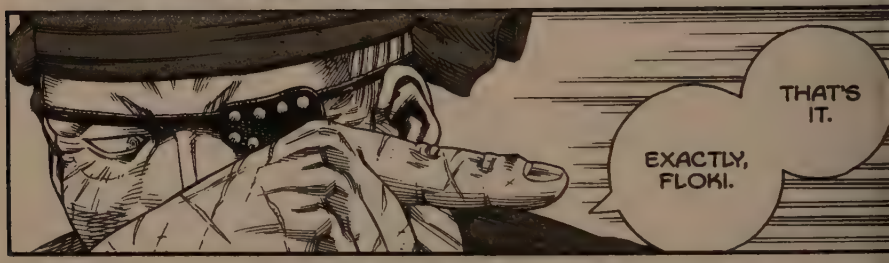
THEY HAVE TAKEN TO RAIDING AND PIRATING AROUND THE BALTIC SEA, EXPANDING THEIR POWER.

NO DOUBT HE WILL SOON RETURN TO THE FOLD TO STAKE HIS CLAIM FOR LEADERSHIP.



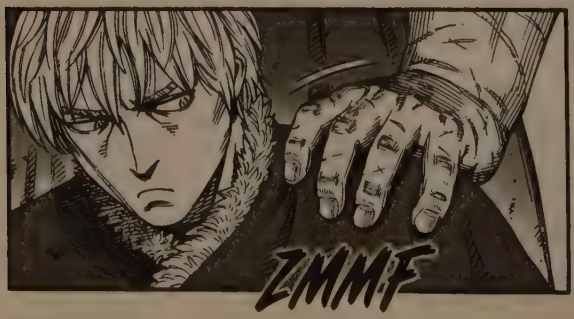



WITHOUT A NAMED SUCCESSOR TO THE THRONE, IT IS ONLY NATURAL TO CHOOSE BY BLOODLINE.
MY GRANDSON, BALDR...
...HAPPENS TO BE THE SON OF THE PREVIOUS CHIEFTAIN, AND ALSO THE GRANDSON OF SIGVALDI, THE SECOND-GENERATION CHIEF.


THAT'S IT.
EXACTLY, FLOKI.

THUD
THUD

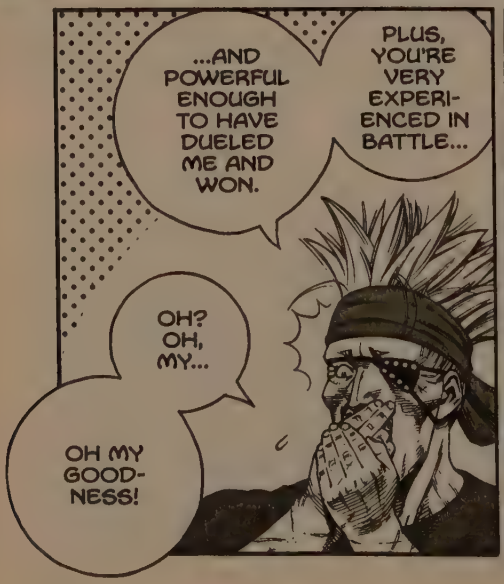
GRRK

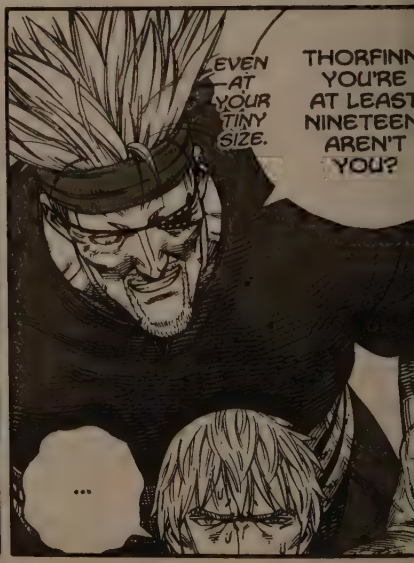

ZMMF

YOU'RE LEAVING OUT A VERY IMPORTANT DETAIL.
SMIRK SMIRK
WHY ARE YOU BEING SO SLY, DICE-HEAD?
...
THAT'S HIS GRAND-SON.
TALK ABOUT FAVORITISM! HAS HE NO SHAME?
HERE'S THE THING, THORFINN: THAT TEN-YEAR-OLD CANDIDATE?

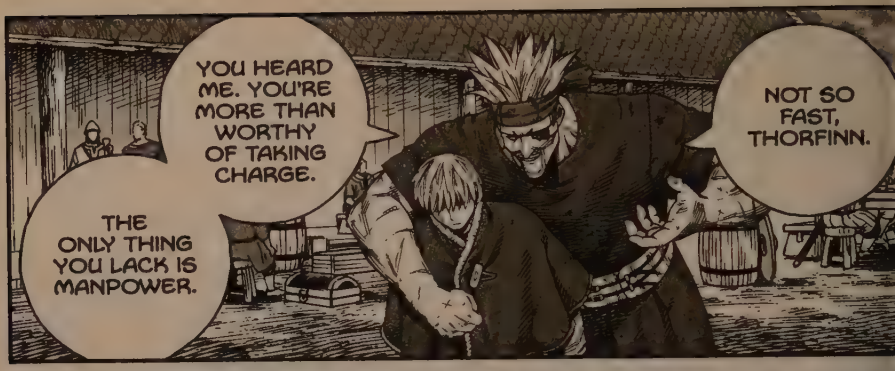
OOOOHH!!!
HEAR, HEAR!
SOUNDS GOOD!
WHATEVER THAT MEANS!
BWA HA HA HA!

BWA HA HA!
VERY IMPRESSIVE, I GUESS!


...AND POWERFUL ENOUGH TO HAVE DUELED ME AND WON.
PLUS, YOU'RE VERY EXPERI-ENCED IN BATTLE...
OH? OH, MY...
OH MY GOOD-NESS!

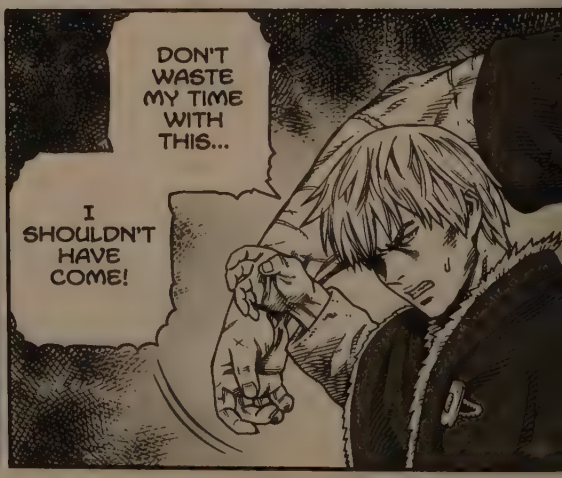

EVEN AT YOUR TINY SIZE.
THORFINN YOU'RE AT LEAST NINETEEN AREN'T YOU?
...

HE IS THE RENOWNED THORFINN KARL-SEFNI!!
THE GRANDSON OF CHIEFTAIN SIGVALDI! SON OF THORS, THE TROLL OF JOM!
DO YOU REALIZE WHO THIS IS?!


YOU HEARD ME. YOU'RE MORE THAN WORTHY OF TAKING CHARGE.
THE ONLY THING YOU LACK IS MANPOWER.
NOT SO FAST, THORFINN.

YOU CAN DO IT! YOU CAN RULE THE BALTIC!
HEE HEE HEE!
WHY DON'T YOU JOIN FORCES WITH ME AND TAKE OVER THE JOMS-VIKINGS?

ZSH


DON'T WASTE MY TIME WITH THIS...
I SHOULDN'T HAVE COME!

THOR-FINN, ARE YOU...

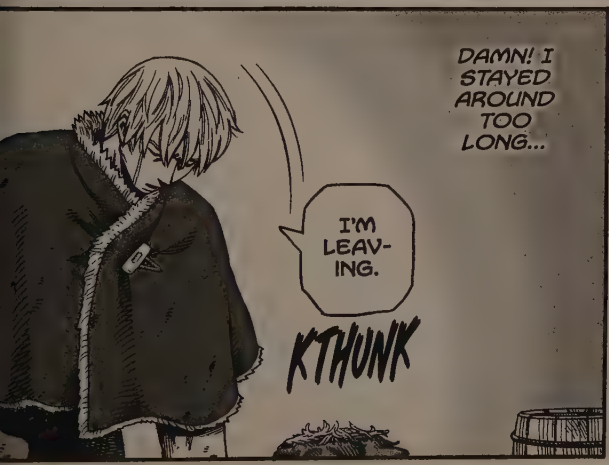
...ACTUALLY THE CLOSEST MAN OF *ANY* TO BEING WORTHY OF LEADING THE JOMS-VIKINGS...?!

ENOUGH WITH THE ACT!!

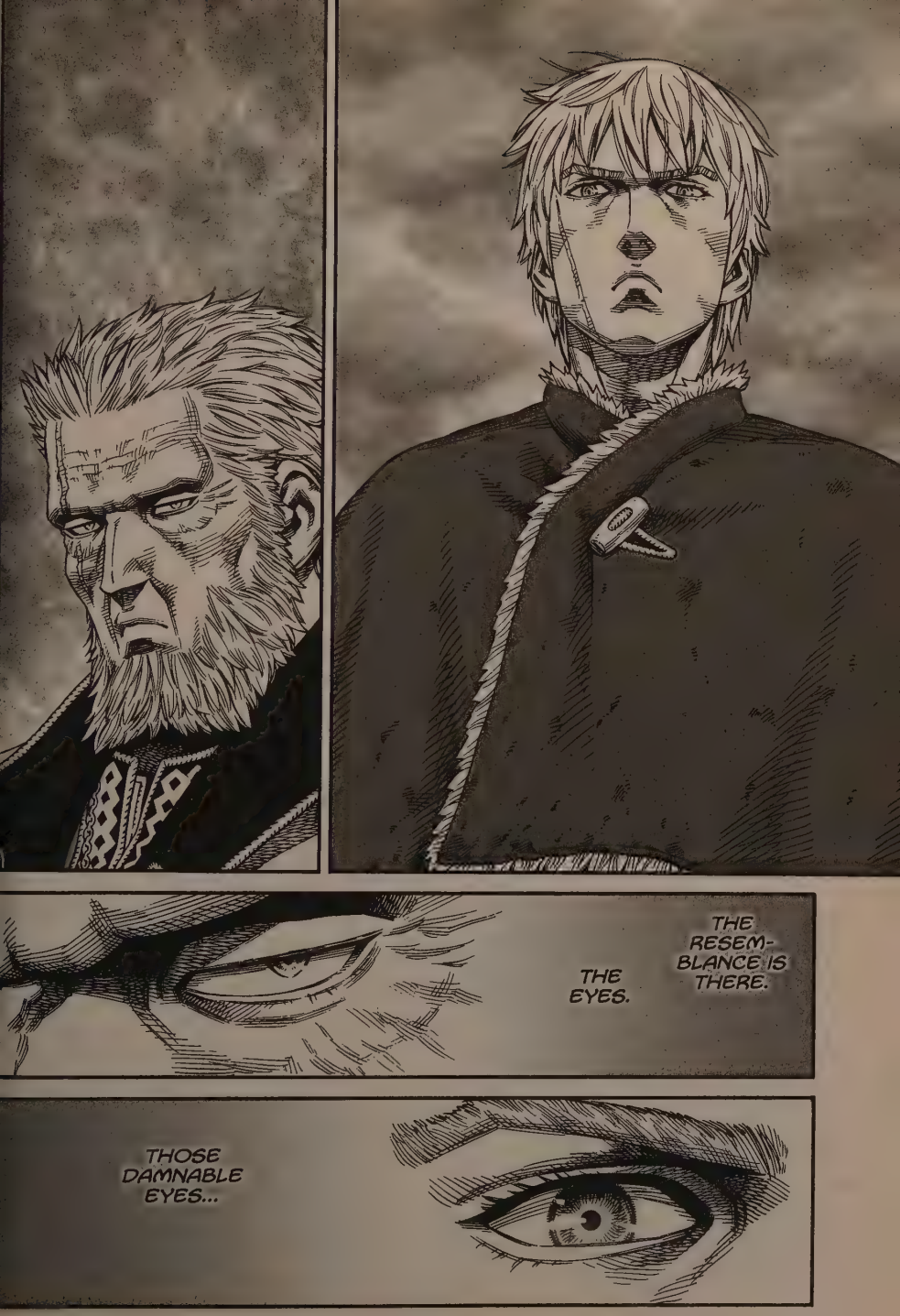
YE GODS...

IT CAN'T BE...

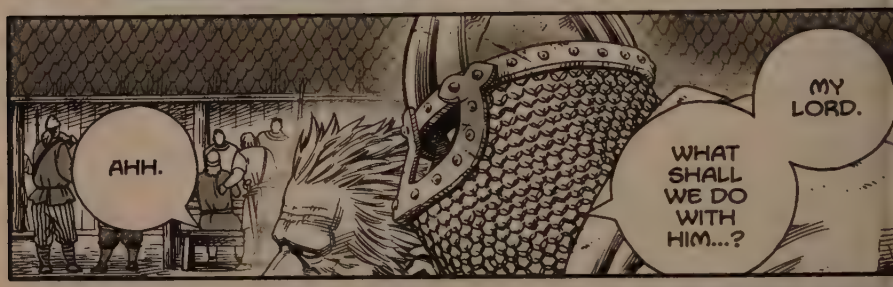
MUR-MUR



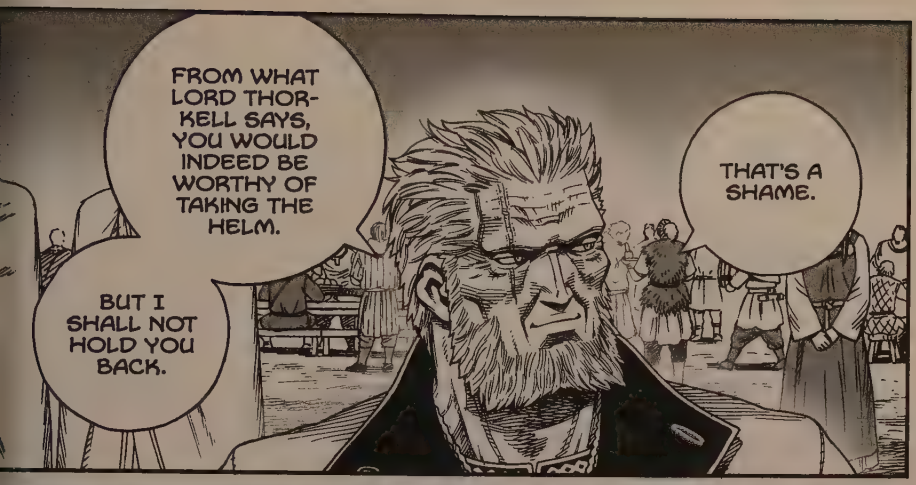
IN THE SUCCESSION OF THE JOMS-VIKINGS.
I HAVE ABSOLUTE-LY NO INTEREST-NONE AT ALL!
I WILL BE FRANK WITH YOU.
IF ANY-THING, I'D RATHER NOT BE INVOLVED.
I DOUBT WE SHALL EVER MEET AGAIN.
I WILL NOT BOTHER YOU; IN RETURN, PLEASE FOR-GET ABOUT MY EXIS-TENCE.

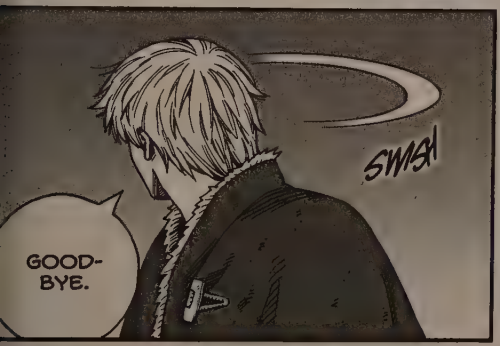

THE EYES.
THE RESEM-BLANCE IS THERE.
THOSE DAMNABLE EYES...

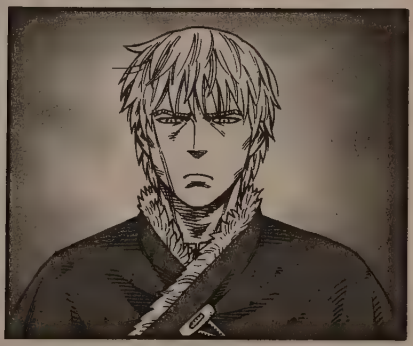
NOW HE'S LOST HIS EDGE. HE'S NOT *HUNGRY* ANYMORE.
MAN, HE USED TO BE A LOT MORE FUN.

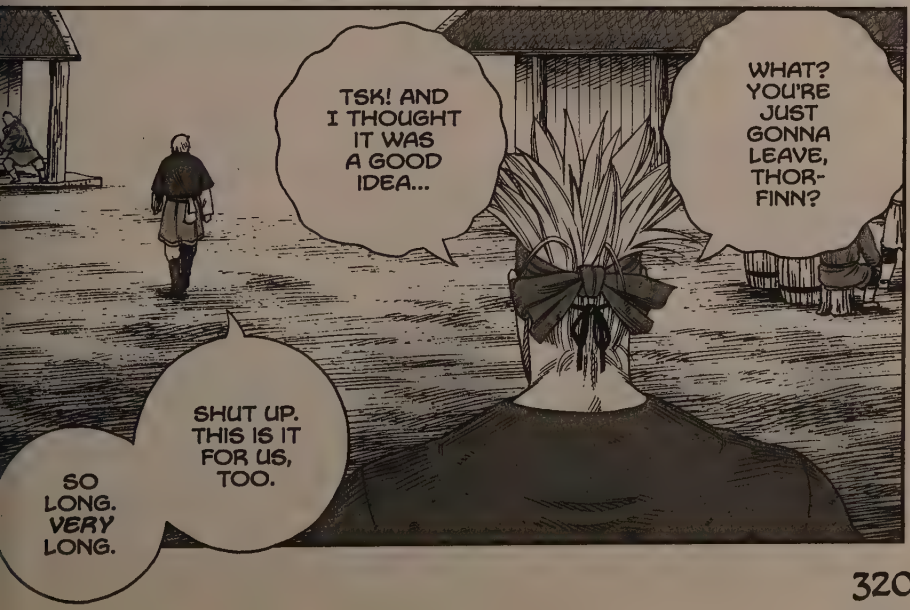

AHH.
WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HIM...?
MY LORD.

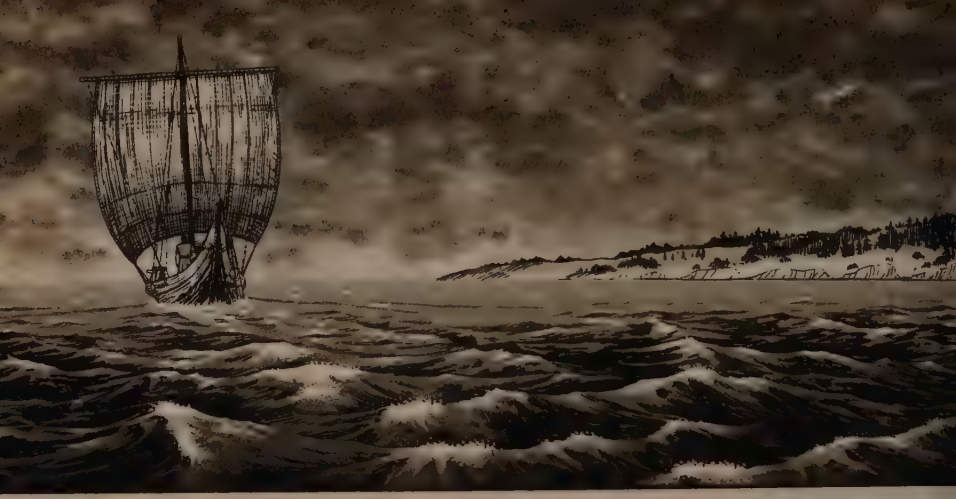
NOT HERE. NOT IN JELLING.
HE *IS* THORKELL'S BLOOD, AFTER ALL...

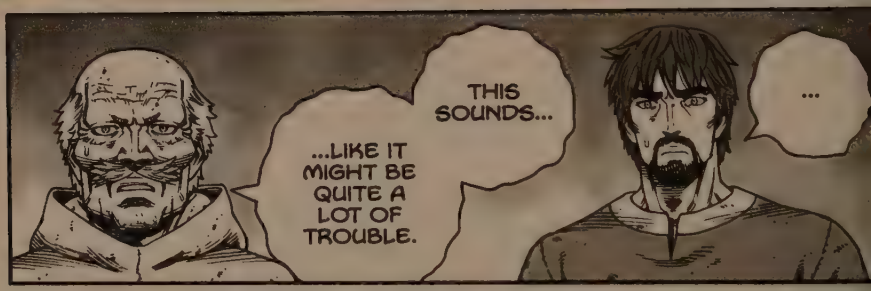

FROM WHAT LORD THOR-KELL SAYS, YOU WOULD INDEED BE WORTHY OF TAKING THE HELM.
BUT I SHALL NOT HOLD YOU BACK.
THAT'S A SHAME.

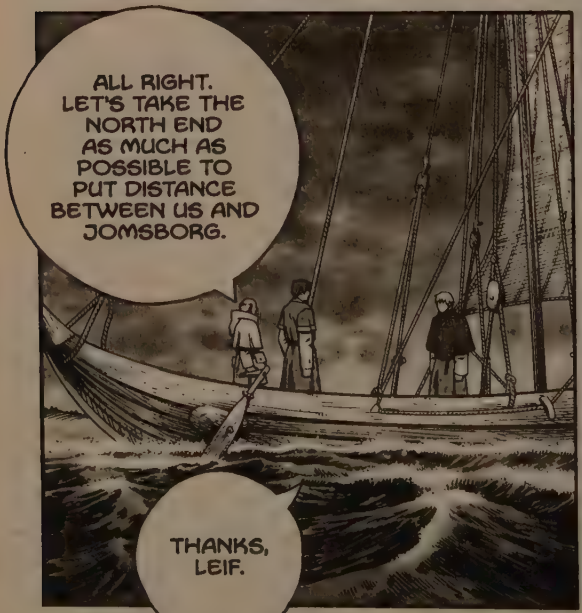

SWISH
GOOD-BYE.

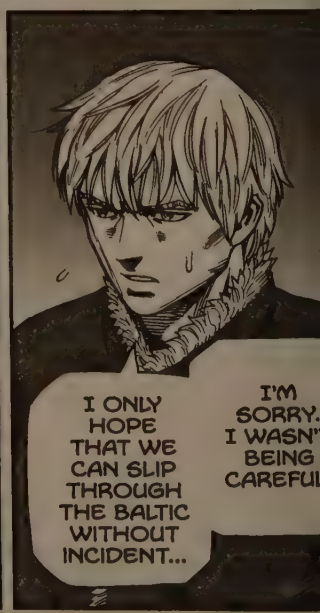


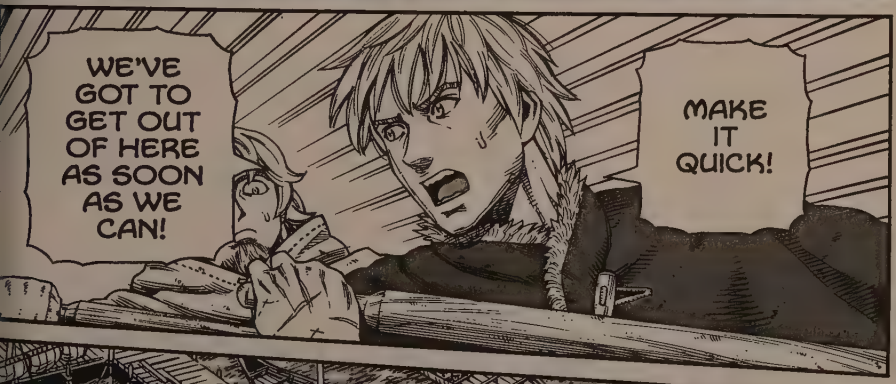

TSK! AND I THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD IDEA...
WHAT? YOU'RE JUST GONNA LEAVE, THOR-FINN?
SHUT UP. THIS IS IT FOR US, TOO.
SO LONG. VERY LONG.

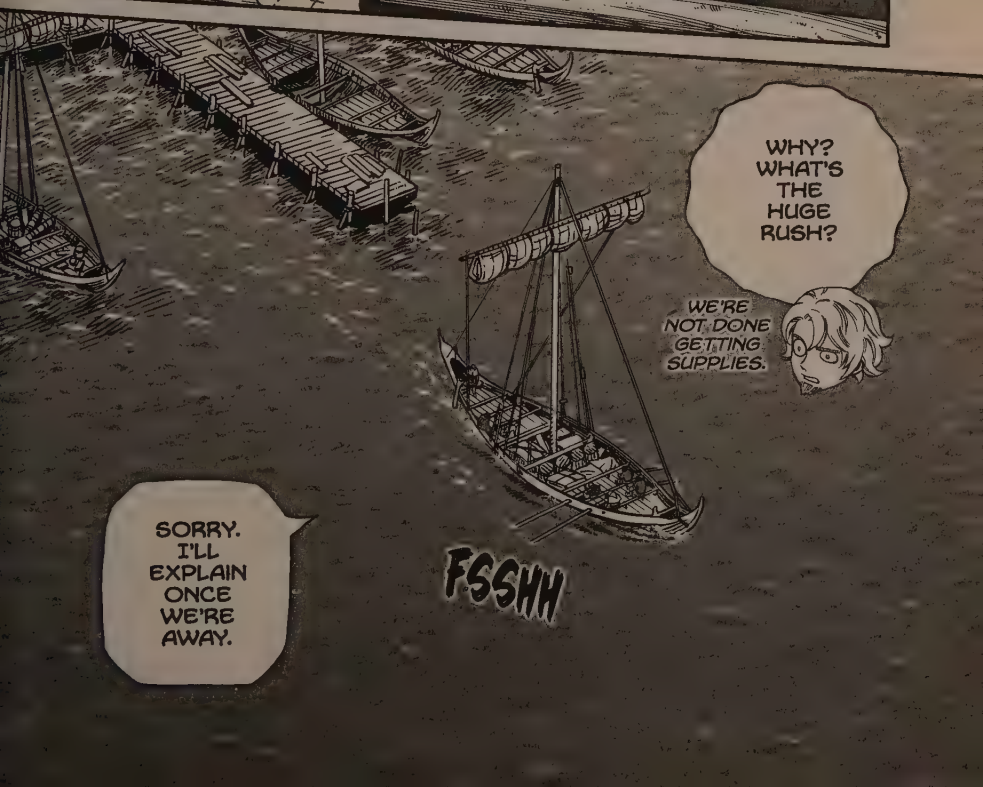



...LIKE IT MIGHT BE QUITE A LOT OF TROUBLE.
THIS SOUNDS...
...

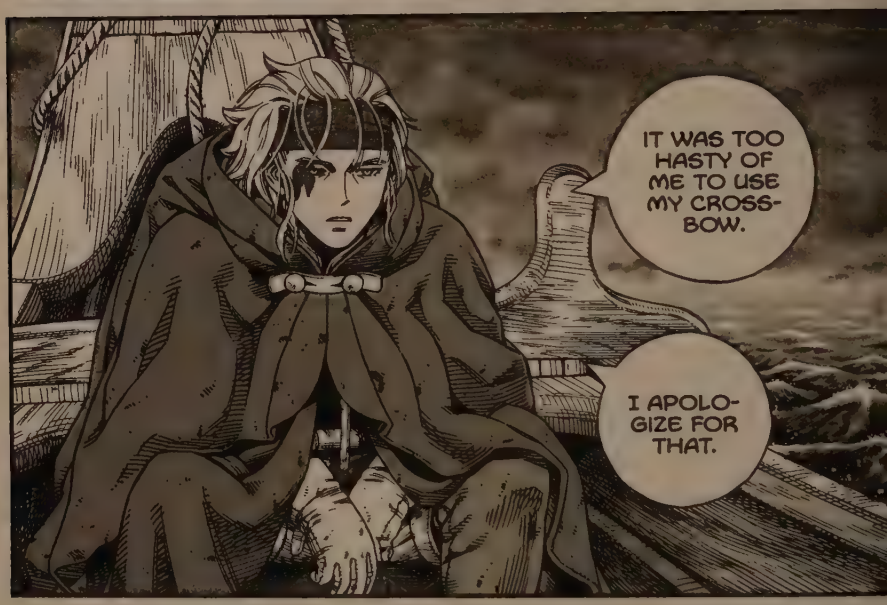

ALL RIGHT. LET'S TAKE THE NORTH END AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO PUT DISTANCE BETWEEN US AND JOMSBORG.
THANKS, LEIF.

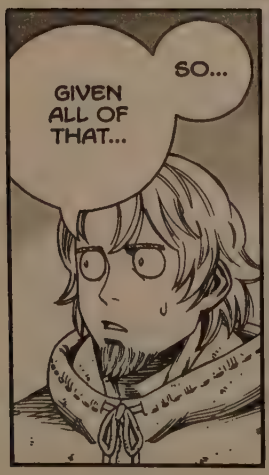

I ONLY HOPE THAT WE CAN SLIP THROUGH THE BALTIC WITHOUT INCIDENT...
I'M SORRY. I WASN'
BEING
CAREFUL

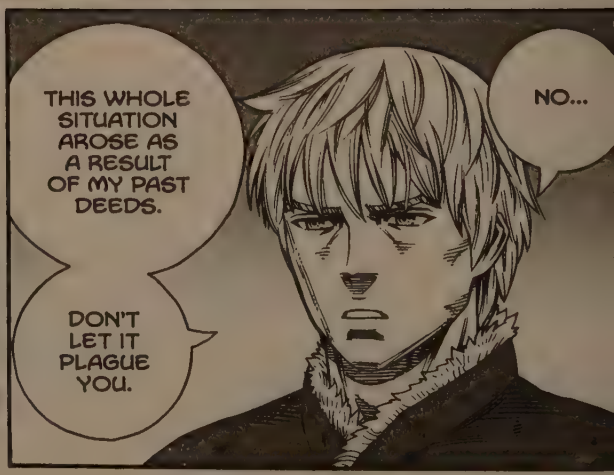

WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE AS SOON AS WE CAN!
MAKE IT QUICK!

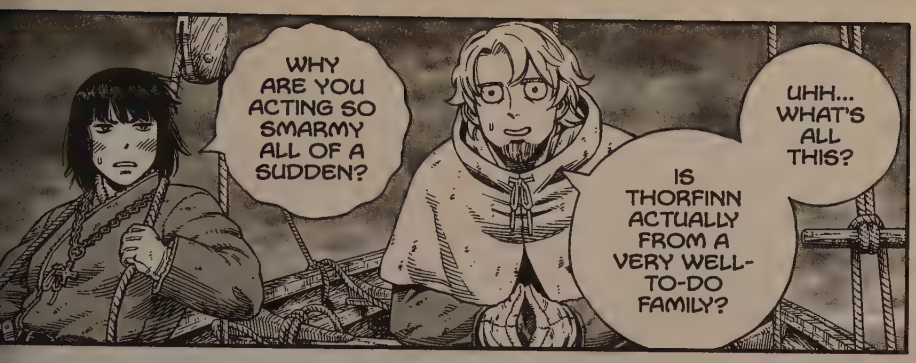

WHY? WHAT'S THE HUGE RUSH?
WE'RE NOT DONE GETTING SUPPLIES.
SORRY. I'LL EXPLAIN ONCE WE'RE AWAY.
FSSHH

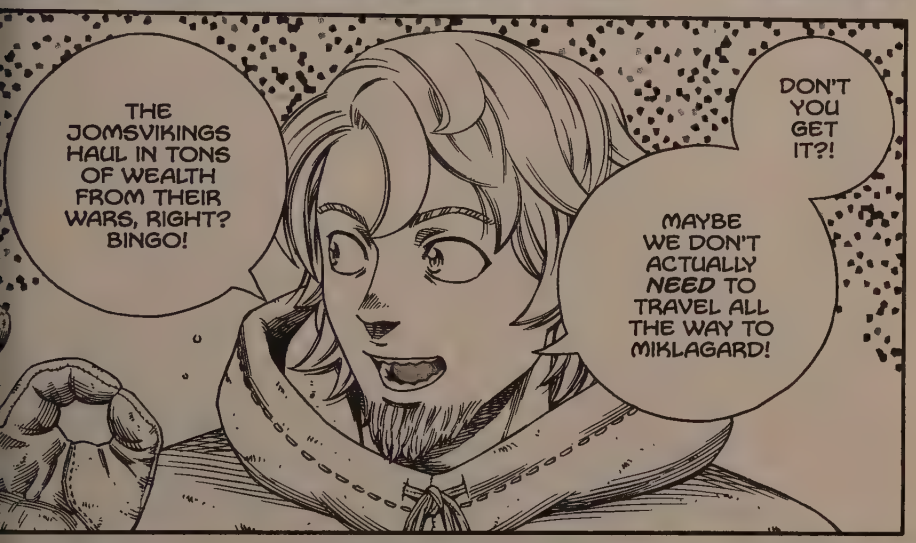
THORFINN.

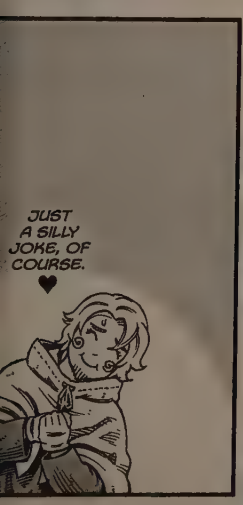

IT WAS TOO HASTY OF ME TO USE MY CROSS-BOW.
I APOLO-GIZE FOR THAT.


SO...
GIVEN ALL OF THAT...


THIS WHOLE SITUATION AROSE AS A RESULT OF MY PAST DEEDS.
NO...
DON'T LET IT PLAGUE YOU.

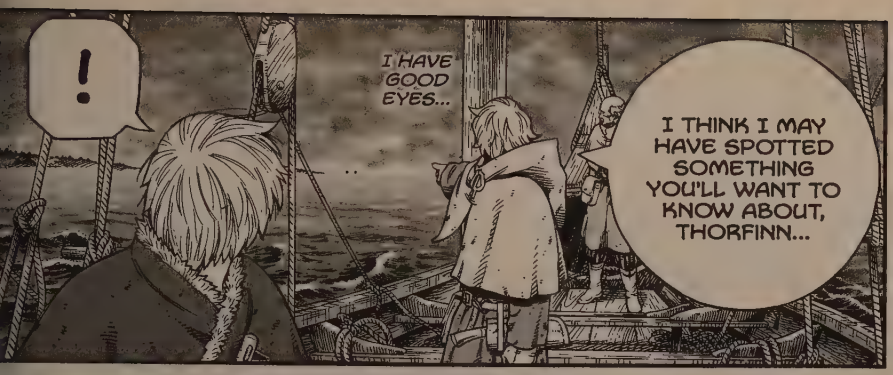

WHY ARE YOU ACTING SO SMARMY ALL OF A SUDDEN?
UHH... WHAT'S ALL THIS?
IS THORFINN ACTUALLY FROM A VERY WELL-TO-DO FAMILY?

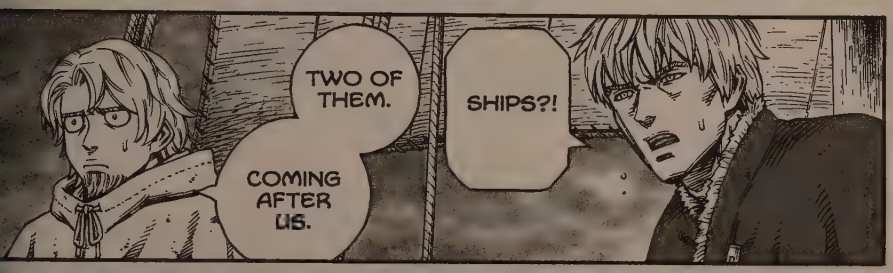

THE JOMSVIKINGS HAUL IN TONS OF WEALTH FROM THEIR WARS, RIGHT? BINGO!
DON'T YOU GET IT?!
MAYBE WE DON'T ACTUALLY *NEED* TO TRAVEL ALL THE WAY TO MIKLAGARD!


JUST A SILLY JOKE, OF COURSE. ♥

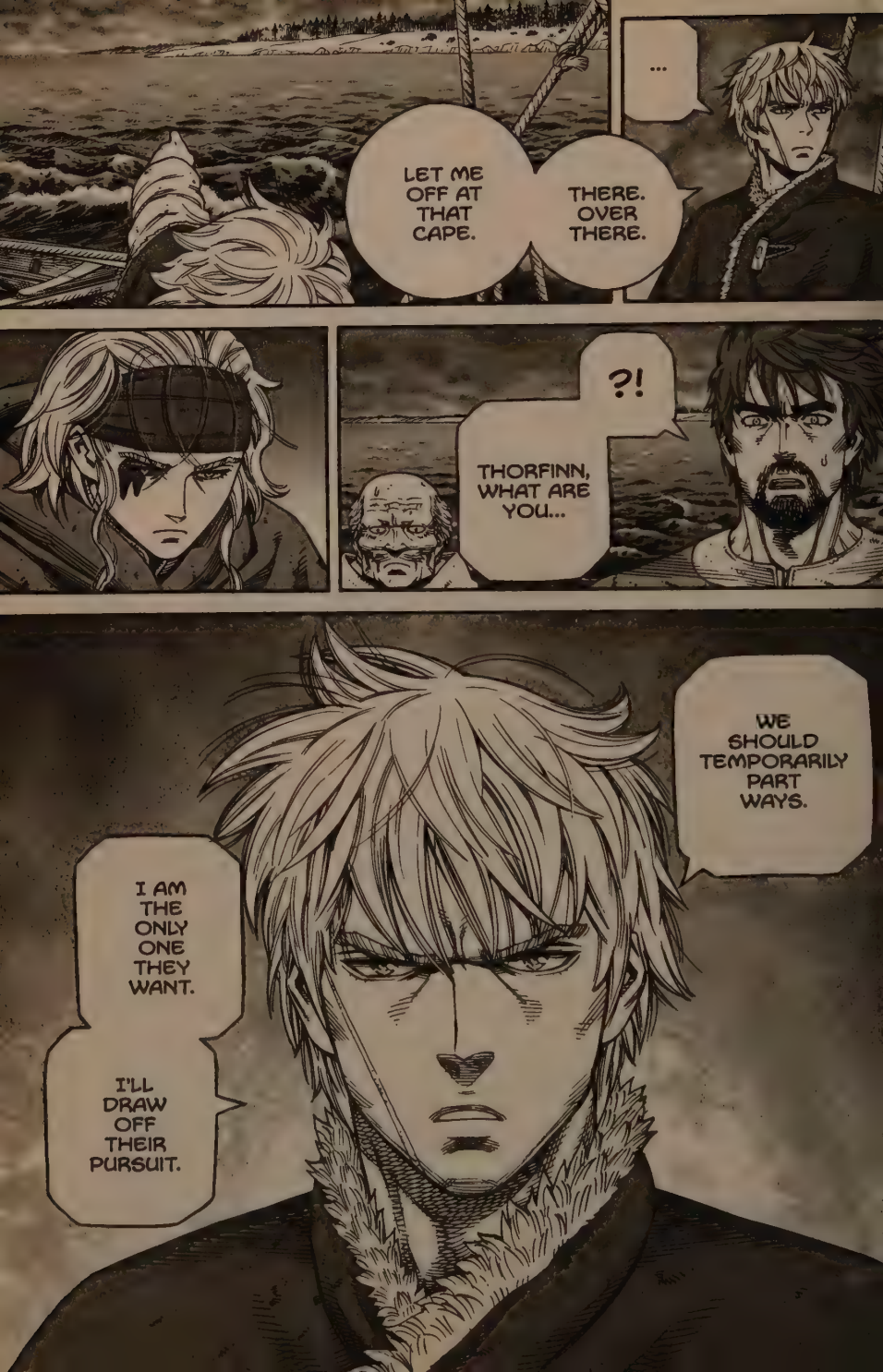
...
IS THAT A SERIOUS SUGGES-TION, BUG-EYES?

CHAPTER 128: WAR IN THE BALTIC (4)

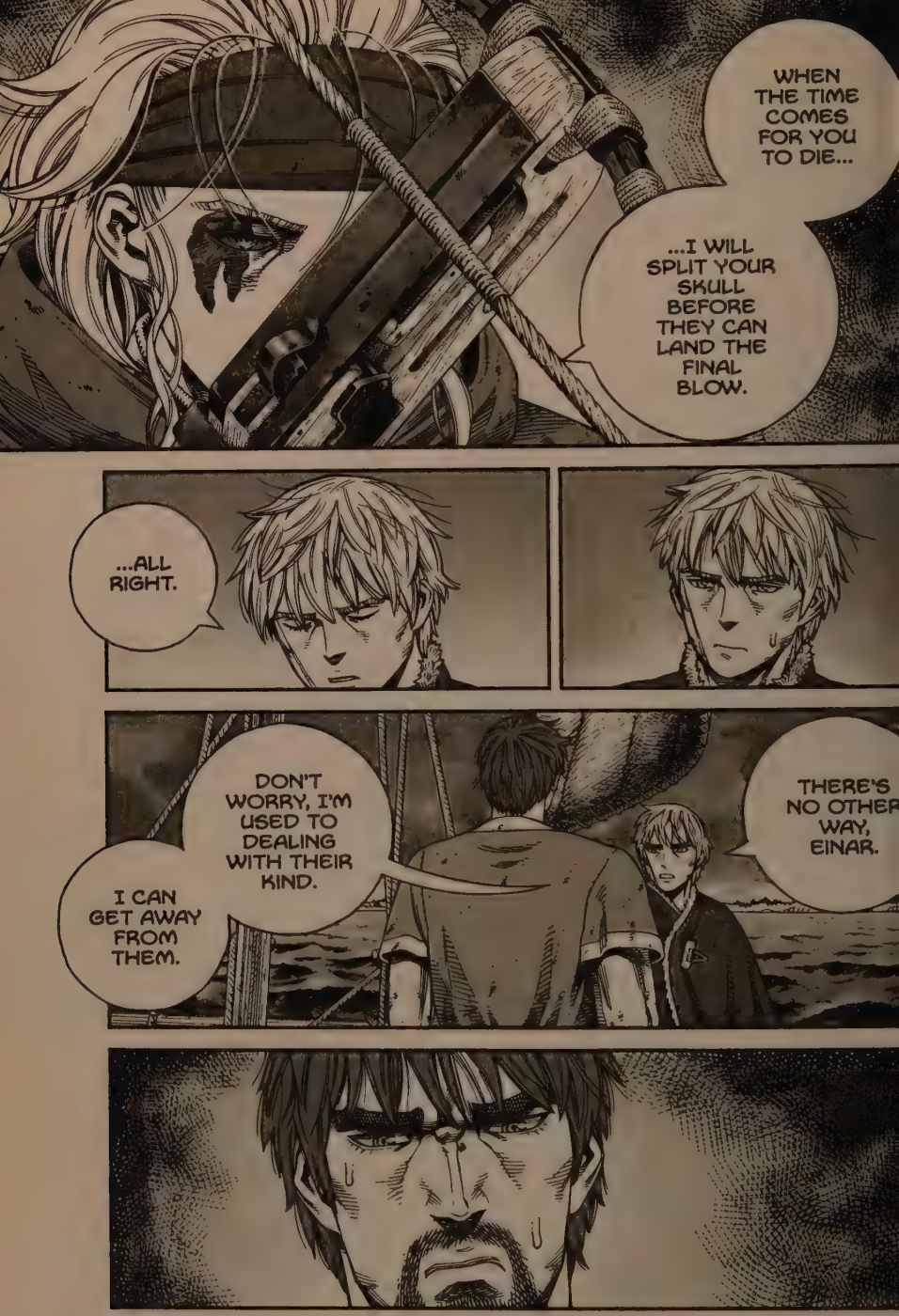

!
I HAVE GOOD EYES...
I THINK I MAY HAVE SPOTTED SOMETHING YOU'LL WANT TO KNOW ABOUT, THORFINN...

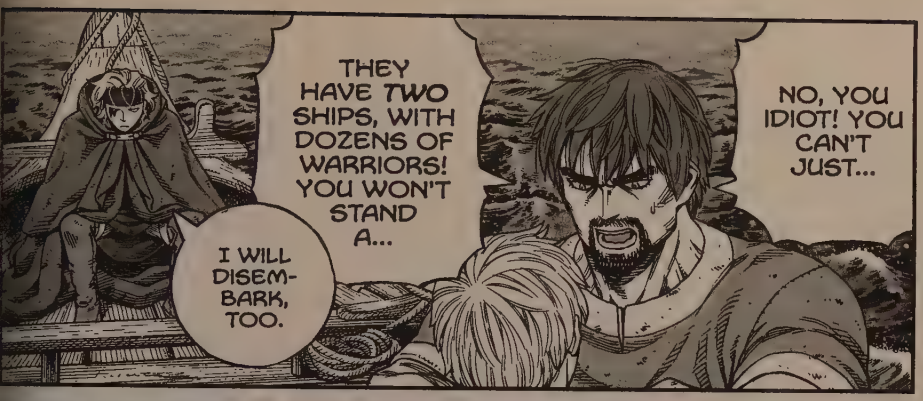

SHIPS?!
TWO OF THEM.
COMING AFTER US.

SHIT!
THAT'LL BE FLOKI...

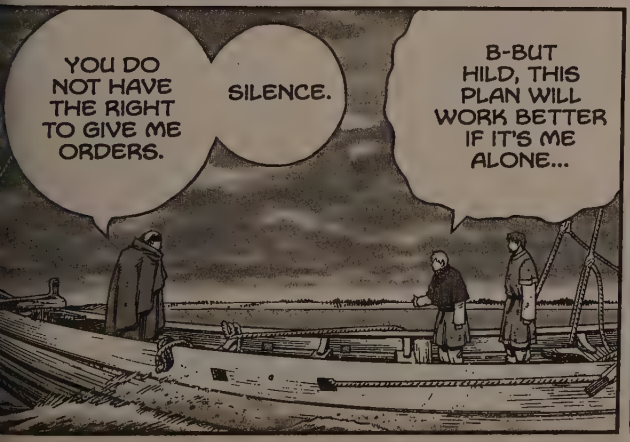

LET ME OFF AT THAT CAPE.
THERE. OVER THERE.
...
?!
THORFINN, WHAT ARE YOU...
WE SHOULD TEMPORARILY PART WAYS.
I AM THE ONLY ONE THEY WANT.
I'LL DRAW OFF THEIR PURSUIT.

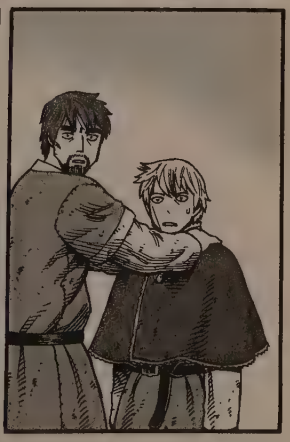
ARE THEY WAR-SHIPS?
I THINK SO. LOTS OF OARS.
AND THEY'VE GOT SAILS WORKING, TOO. THEY'LL CATCH UP QUICK.
OUR CARGO SHIP CAN'T OUTPACE THEM.
WE NEED TO COME UP WITH A PLAN WHILE WE'RE STILL AHEAD.
LIKE... SURRENDER? MAYBE THEY'LL LET US LIVE...

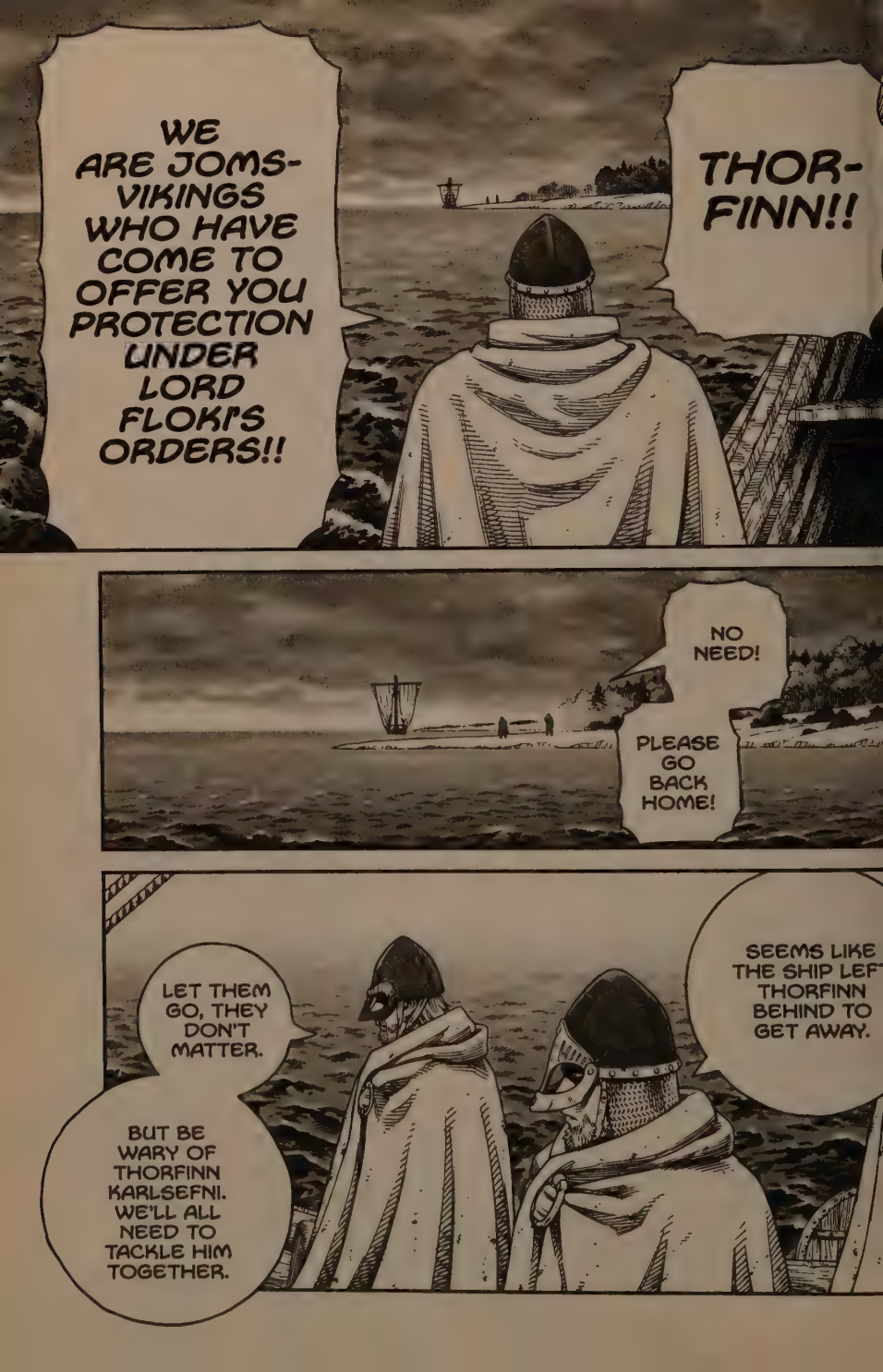

WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR YOU TO DIE...
...I WILL SPLIT YOUR SKULL BEFORE THEY CAN LAND THE FINAL BLOW.
...ALL RIGHT.
DON'T WORRY, I'M USED TO DEALING WITH THEIR KIND.
I CAN GET AWAY FROM THEM.
THERE'S NO OTHER WAY, EINAR.

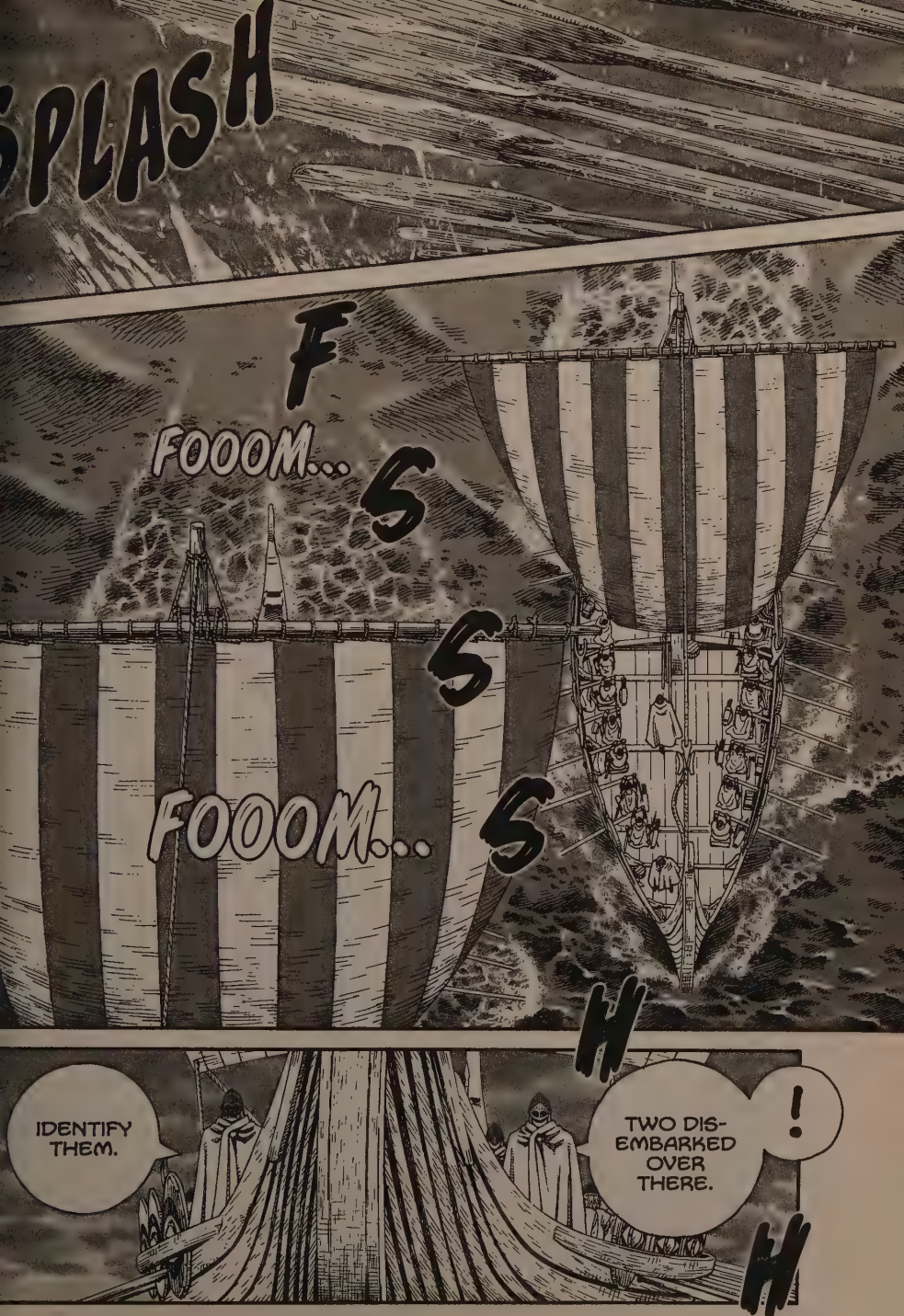

THEY HAVE TWO SHIPS, WITH DOZENS OF WARRIORS! YOU WON'T STAND A...
NO, YOU IDIOT! YOU CAN'T JUST...
I WILL DISEM-BARK, TOO.

I MUST CONTINUE TO WATCH THORFINN.
I DON'T WANT HIM TO ESCAPE FROM ME.

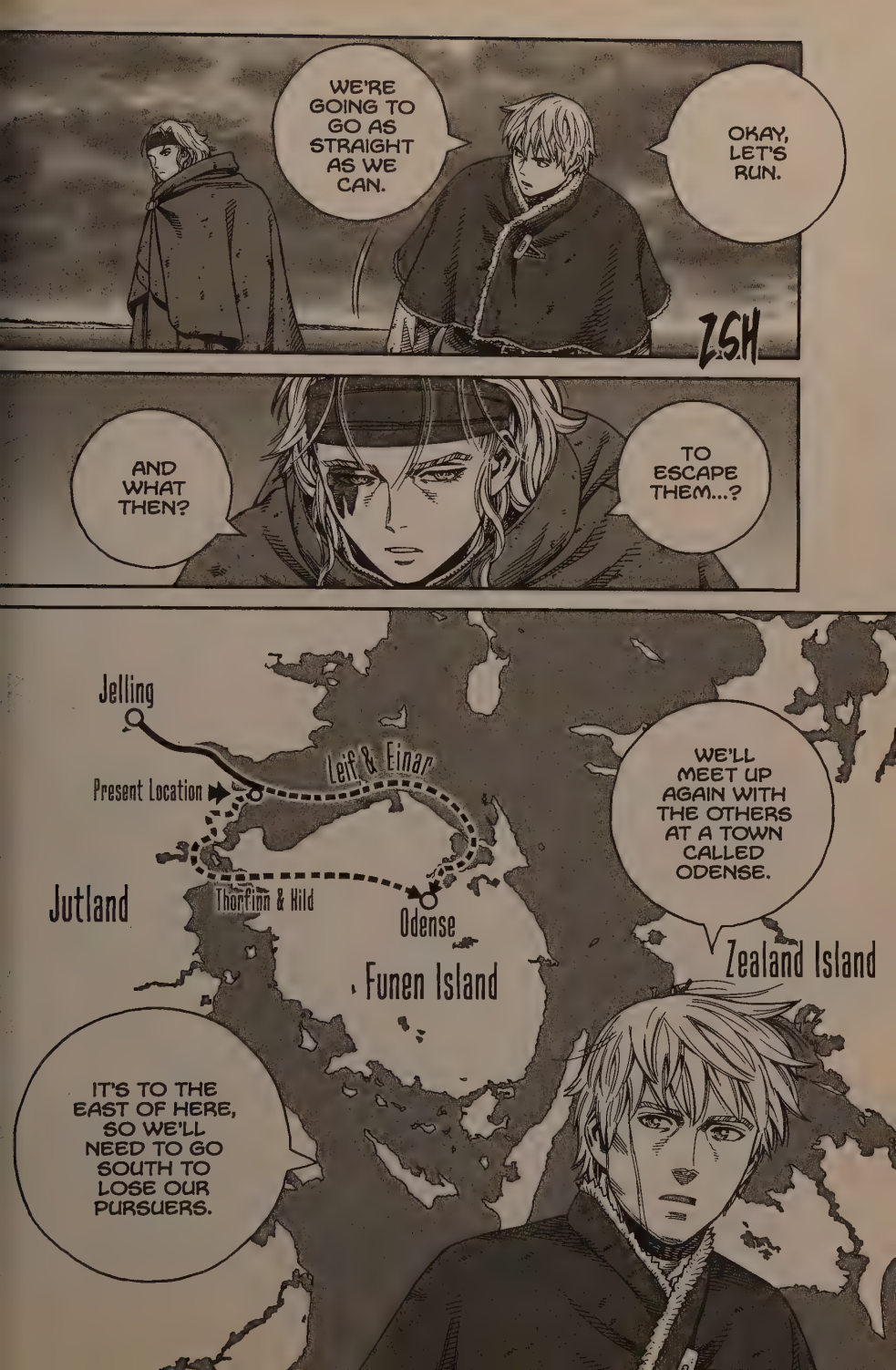

YOU DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO GIVE ME ORDERS.
SILENCE.
B-BUT HILD, THIS PLAN WILL WORK BETTER IF IT'S ME ALONE...



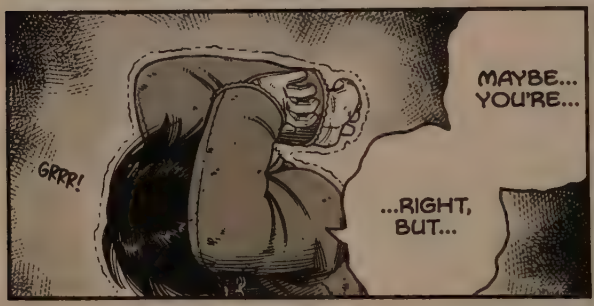

WE ARE JOMS-VIKINGS WHO HAVE COME TO OFFER YOU PROTECTION UNDER LORD FLOKI'S ORDERS!!
THOR-FINN!!
NO NEED!
PLEASE GO BACK HOME!
LET THEM GO, THEY DON'T MATTER.
BUT BE WARY OF THORFINN KARLSEFNI. WE'LL ALL NEED TO TACKLE HIM TOGETHER.
SEEMS LIKE THE SHIP LEFT THORFINN BEHIND TO GET AWAY.

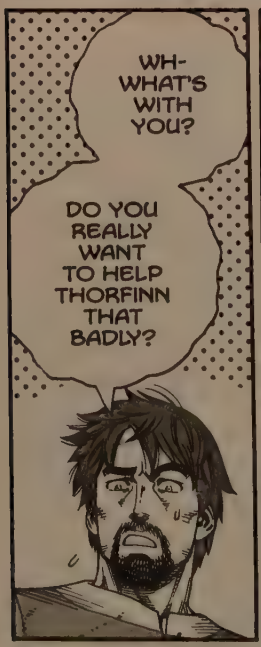

SPLASH
F
FOOOM...
S
S
FOOOM...
S
H
IDENTIFY THEM.
TWO DIS-EMBARKED OVER THERE.
!
H

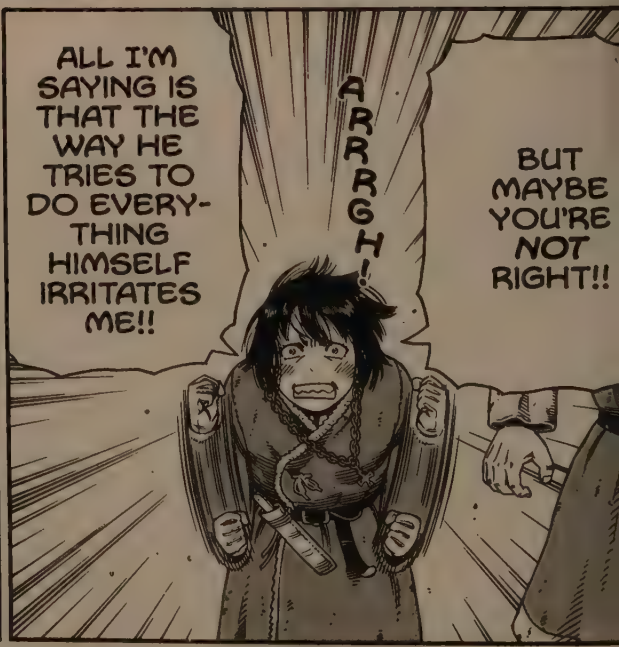
WE'D BETTER HOPE THEY DON'T PICK UP ON THAT PLAN, TOO.
...HMPH.
WHOOO...
NOPE.
BOTH SHIPS WENT AFTER THORFINN.
...
THEY'RE... NOT FOLLOW-ING.

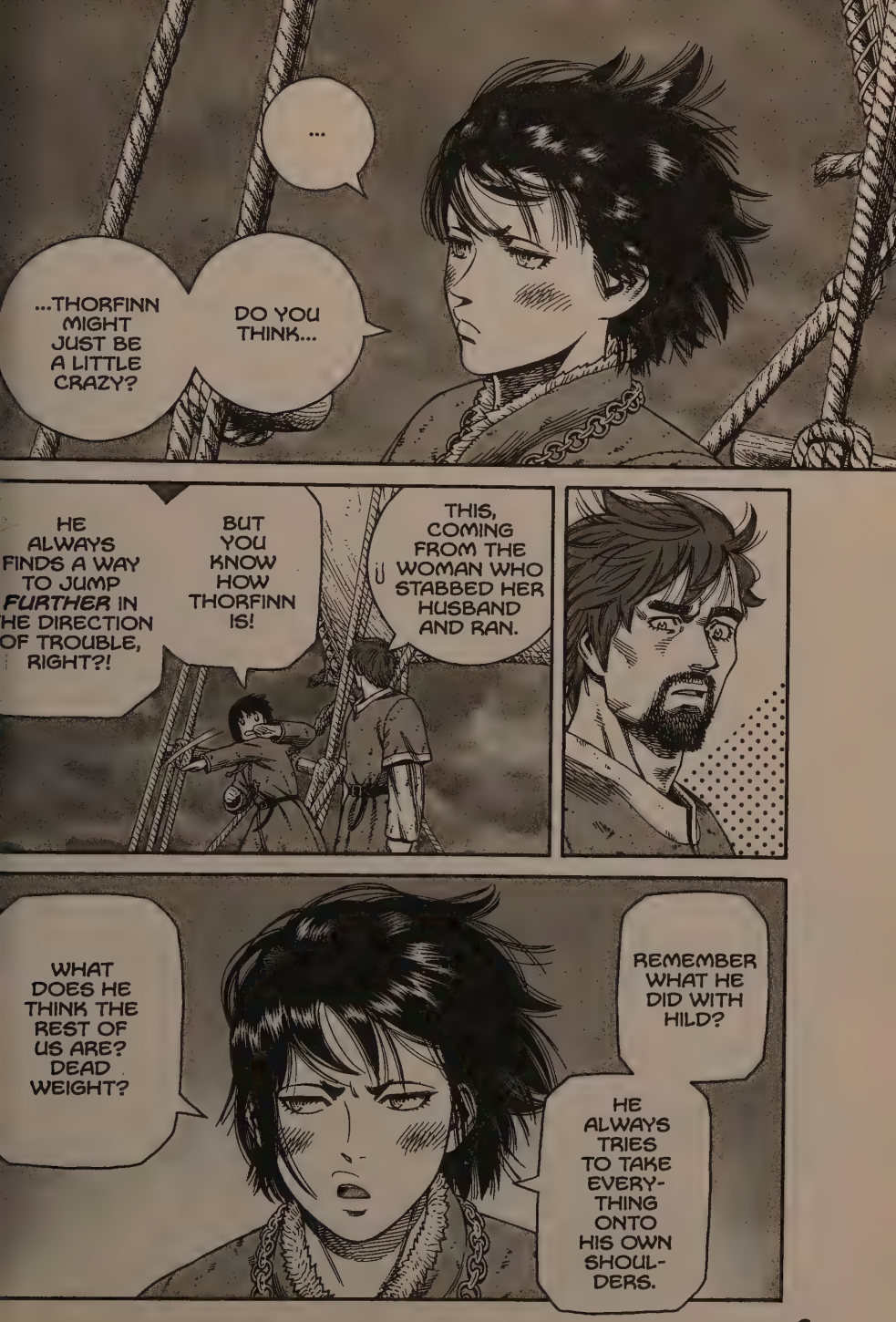

WE'RE GOING TO GO AS STRAIGHT AS WE CAN.
OKAY, LET'S RUN.
ZSH
AND WHAT THEN?
TO ESCAPE THEM...?
Jelling
Present Location
Leif & Einar
Jutland
Thorfinn & Hild
Odense
Funen Island
Zealand Island
WE'LL MEET UP AGAIN WITH THE OTHERS AT A TOWN CALLED ODENSE.
IT'S TO THE EAST OF HERE, SO WE'LL NEED TO GO SOUTH TO LOSE OUR PURSUERS.

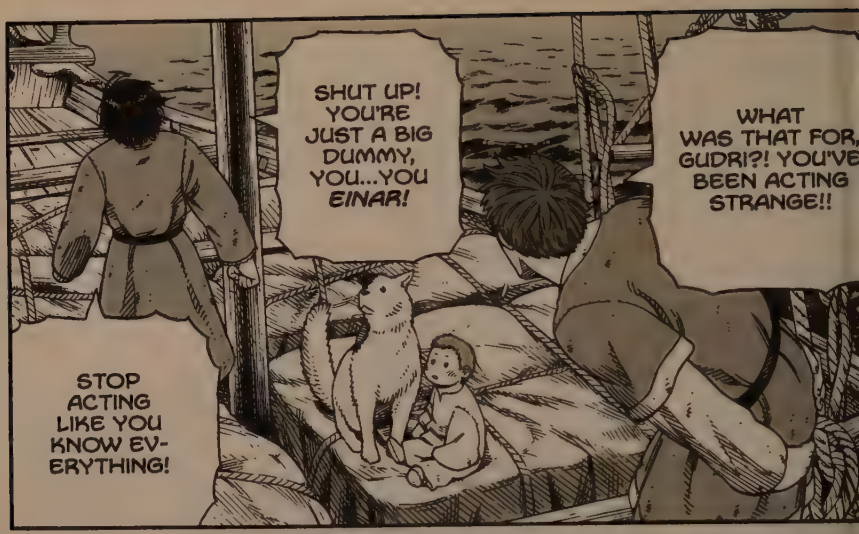
WE HAVE TO FACE THE FACTS: THE ONLY ONE OF US WHO CAN HELP HIM NOW IS HILD.
WHEN IT COMES TO MATTERS OF VIOLENCE, HE'S RIGHT.


GRRR!
MAYBE... YOU'RE...
...RIGHT, BUT...


WH-WHAT'S WITH YOU?
DO YOU REALLY WANT TO HELP THORFINN THAT BADLY?


ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT THE WAY HE TRIES TO DO EVERY-THING HIMSELF IRRITATES ME!!
ARRRGH!
BUT MAYBE YOU'RE NOT RIGHT!!


...
...THORFINN MIGHT JUST BE A LITTLE CRAZY?
DO YOU THINK...
HE ALWAYS FINDS A WAY TO JUMP *FURTHER* IN THE DIRECTION OF TROUBLE, RIGHT?!
BUT YOU KNOW HOW THORFINN IS!
THIS, COMING FROM THE WOMAN WHO STABBED HER HUSBAND AND RAN.
WHAT DOES HE THINK THE REST OF US ARE? DEAD WEIGHT?
REMEMBER WHAT HE DID WITH HILD?
HE ALWAYS TRIES TO TAKE EVERY-THING ONTO HIS OWN SHOUL-DERS.


SHUT UP! YOU'RE JUST A BIG DUMMY, YOU...YOU EINAR!
WHAT WAS THAT FOR, GUDRI?! YOU'VE BEEN ACTING STRANGE!!
STOP ACTING LIKE YOU KNOW EV-ERYTHING!

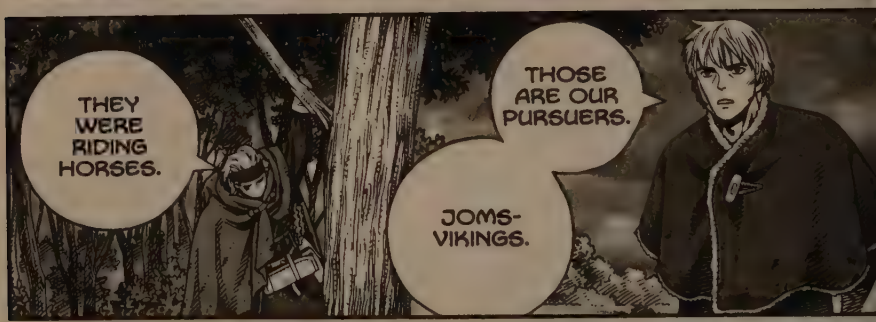
DON'T THINK TOO HARD ABOUT IT.
WHAT DID I DO...?
THE WATERS THAT RUN BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN ARE DARK AND DEEP.

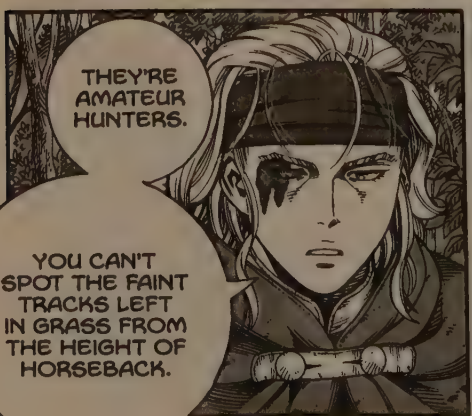
DADUM
DADUM
DADUM

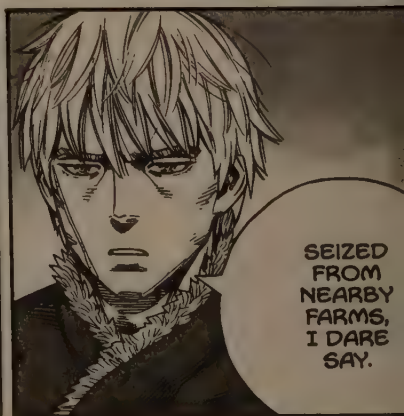
THAT'S ALL WE CAN DO FOR–
THEN THE THING TO DO NOW IS WAIT AT ODENSE.
THWAKK
YEOW!!!

FSHUP

DRM DRM DRM


THEY WERE RIDING HORSES.
THOSE ARE OUR PURSUERS.
JOMS-VIKINGS.

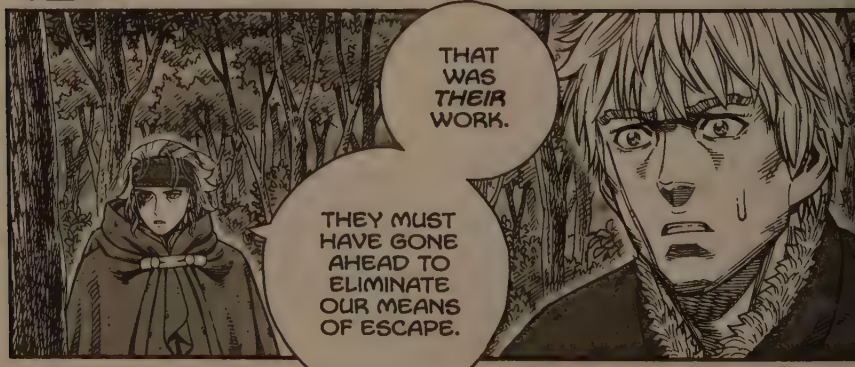

THEY'RE AMATEUR HUNTERS.
YOU CAN'T SPOT THE FAINT TRACKS LEFT IN GRASS FROM THE HEIGHT OF HORSEBACK.

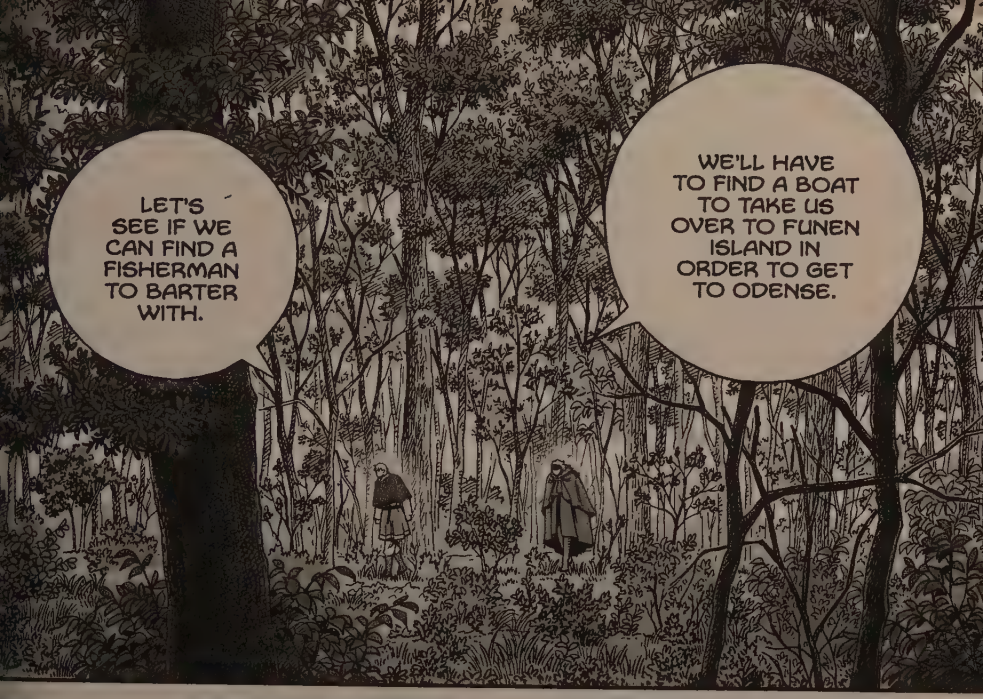

SEIZED FROM NEARBY FARMS, I DARE SAY.

DADUM DA-DUM DADUM
DADUM
DADUM
DADUM

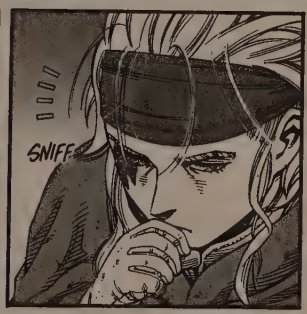
WAAAAH!

AAAAH!

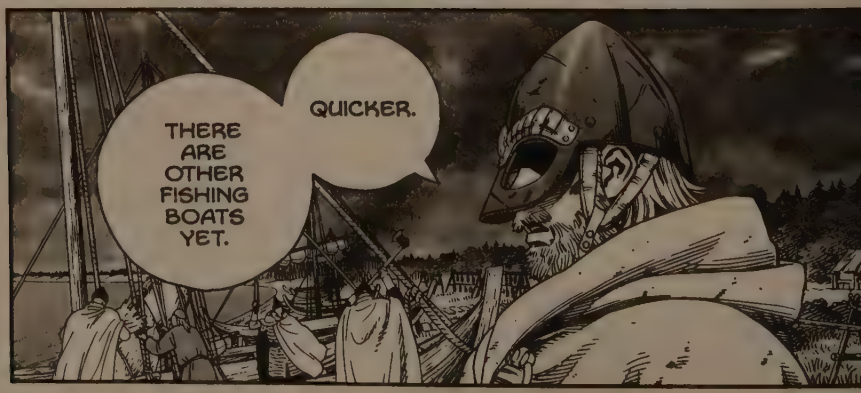


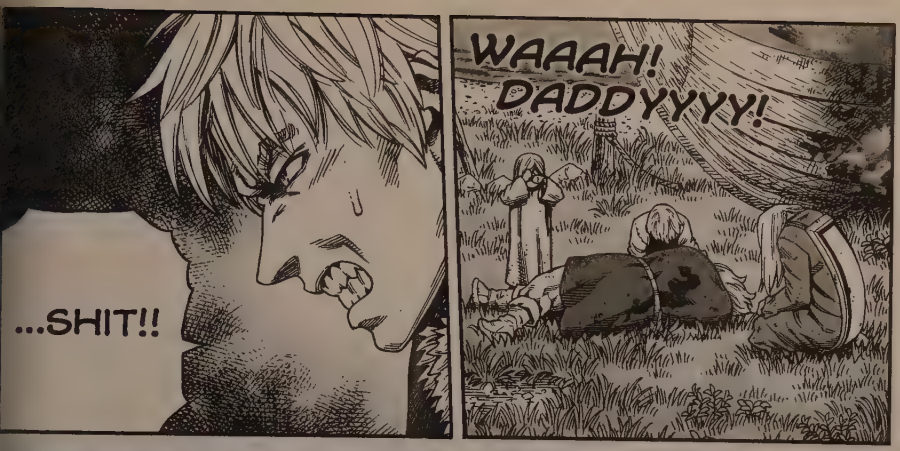

LET'S SEE IF WE CAN FIND A FISHERMAN TO BARTER WITH.
WE'LL HAVE TO FIND A BOAT TO TAKE US OVER TO FUNEN ISLAND IN ORDER TO GET TO ODENSE.

YOU DO? I DON'T...
I SMELL SMOKE.
FROM THE COAST.

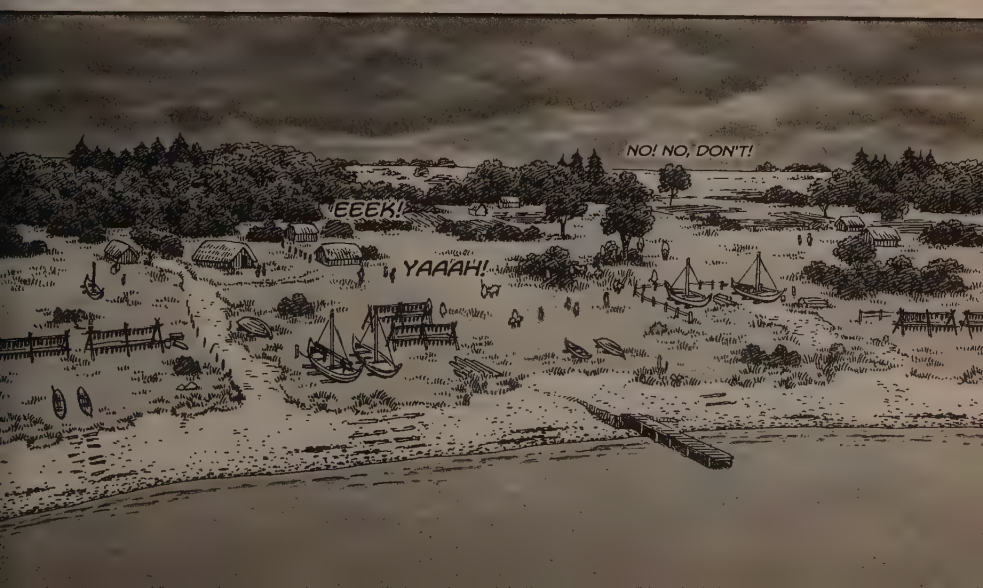

SNIFF

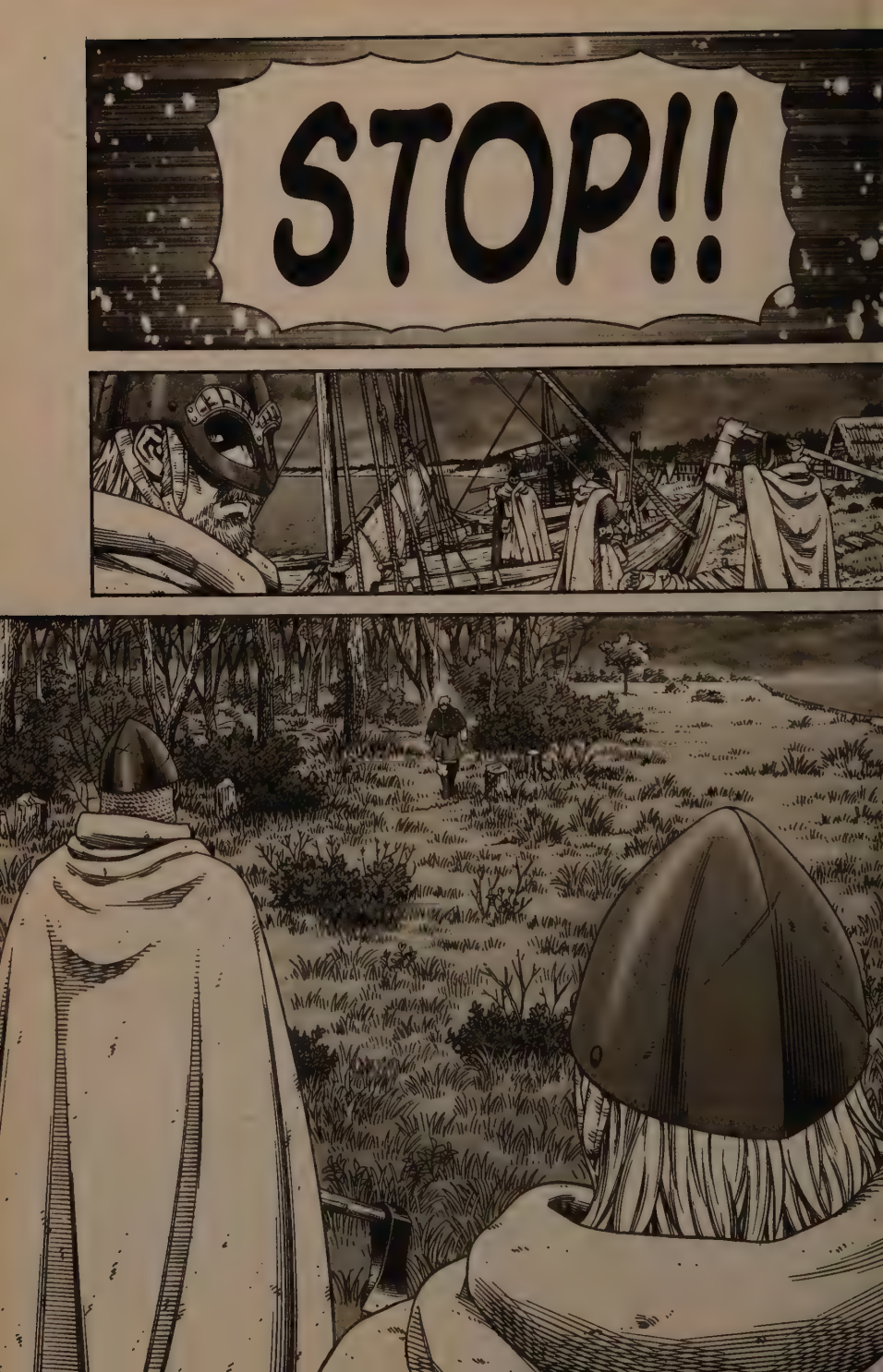
EYAAAA
AAAH
NO, STOP!
GANK
CRAK
CHUNK
CHUK




...SHIT!!
WAAAH! DADDYYYY!

?!
WAIT, THOR-FINN!
DASH


NO! NO, DON'T!
EEEK!
YAAAH!


STOP!!

WHY WOULD YOU...
PLEASE, DON'T DO THIS! I HAVE NO WAY TO FEED MY FAMILY WITHOUT THIS BOAT!
BY WAY OF APOLOGY...
I'M SORRY, COMMONER. WE DON'T WISH TO DO THIS.
...SO THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT FOOD.
...I CAN MAKE IT...

WHY DO YOU PROTECT THESE FISHERS?
DO YOU KNOW THEM?

JUST TAKE ME TO FLOKI!
SHUT UP. I DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER THAT.

SWISH...
ZSHH
HOW-EVER...
YOU'VE SAVED US A LOT OF TROUBLE, THORFINN.
I APPRE-CIATE YOUR HELP.

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

THOR-FINN KARL-SEFNI...

THAT'S THOR-FINN!

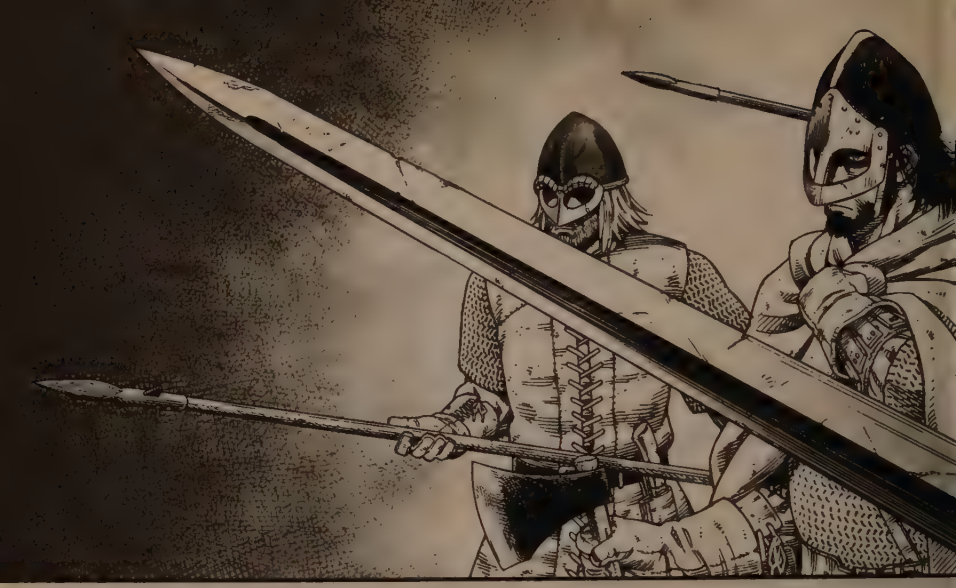
BUT DO NOT HARM THESE INNOCENT PEOPLE!!

YOU WANT ME? HERE I AM.

TAKE ME TO JOMS-BORG, OR WHEREVER YOU WILL, YOU MONSTERS!

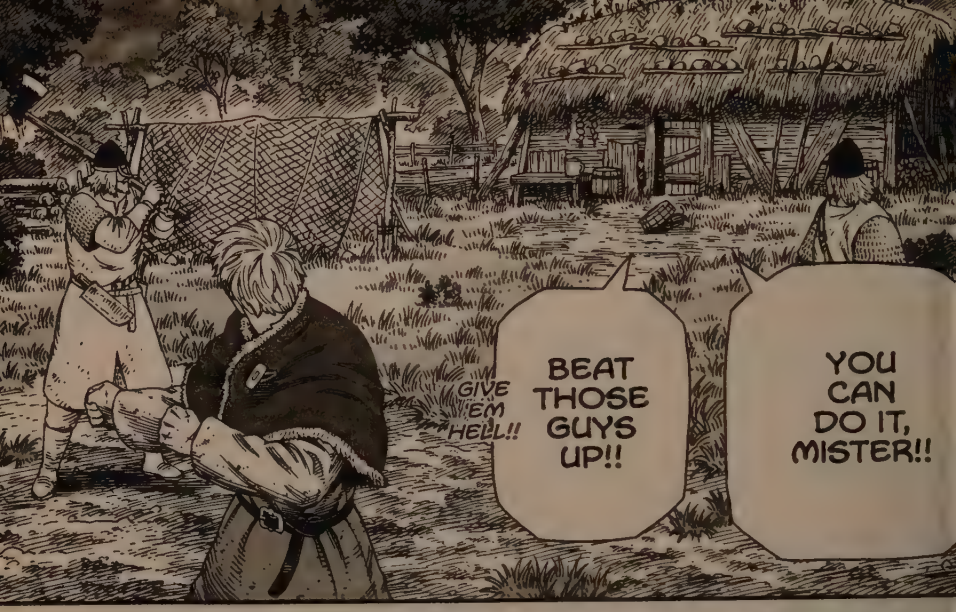
THE IDIOT...!
HE'S GOTTEN HIMSELF SUR-ROUNDED!
DAMN!
MY BREATH-ING'S TOO ROUGH TO STEADY MY AIM!
PHEWWW...
...

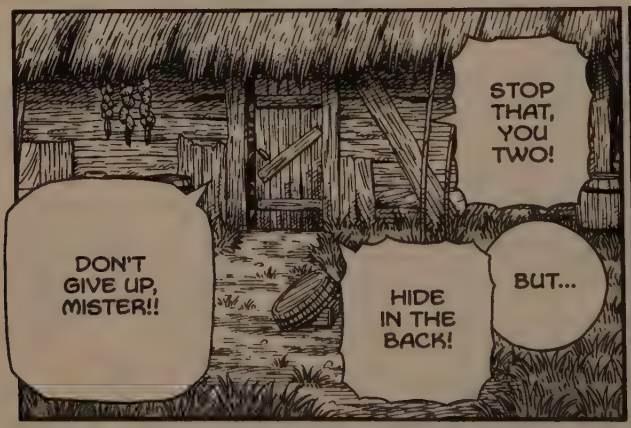
...IS YOUR HEAD.
THE ONLY THING WE NEED TO TAKE BACK...
SSHH...
SHK...
TER! TER! TER!
?!
HUFF
HUFF



CHAPTER 129: WAR IN THE BALTIC (5)

ZSH


YOU CAN DO IT, MISTER!!
BEAT THOSE GUYS UP!!
GIVE 'EM HELL!!


STOP THAT, YOU TWO!
DON'T GIVE UP, MISTER!!
HIDE IN THE BACK!
BUT...

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR WEAPON?
THORFINN...

IS THAT MAN A GOOD GUY?
WHAT'S THAT...ARE THEY ENEMIES?
LET'S CHEER FOR HIM!
HE CAME TO SAVE US.
HE MUST BE A GOOD GUY!

SHKK...

ZSH...

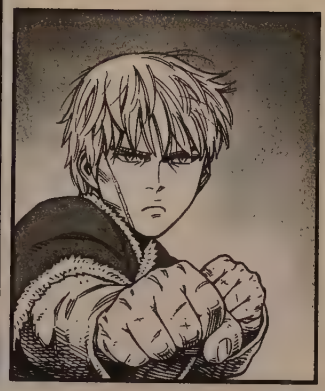
NOW PICK UP THE SWORD.

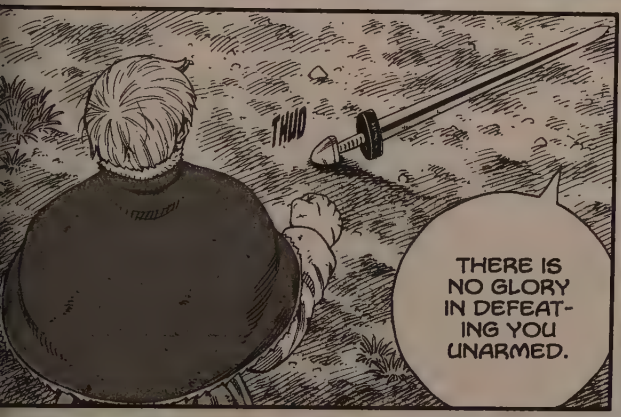
I'M A LUCKY MAN: I GET TO FIGHT THE WARRIOR WHO BESTED GENERAL THORKELL.

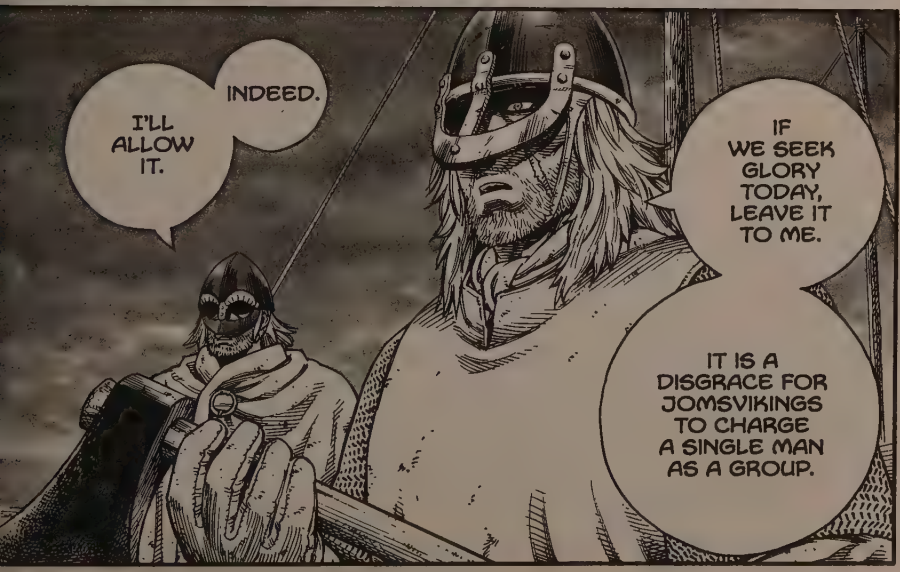
I ALWAYS FOUND IT A MYSTERY.

...

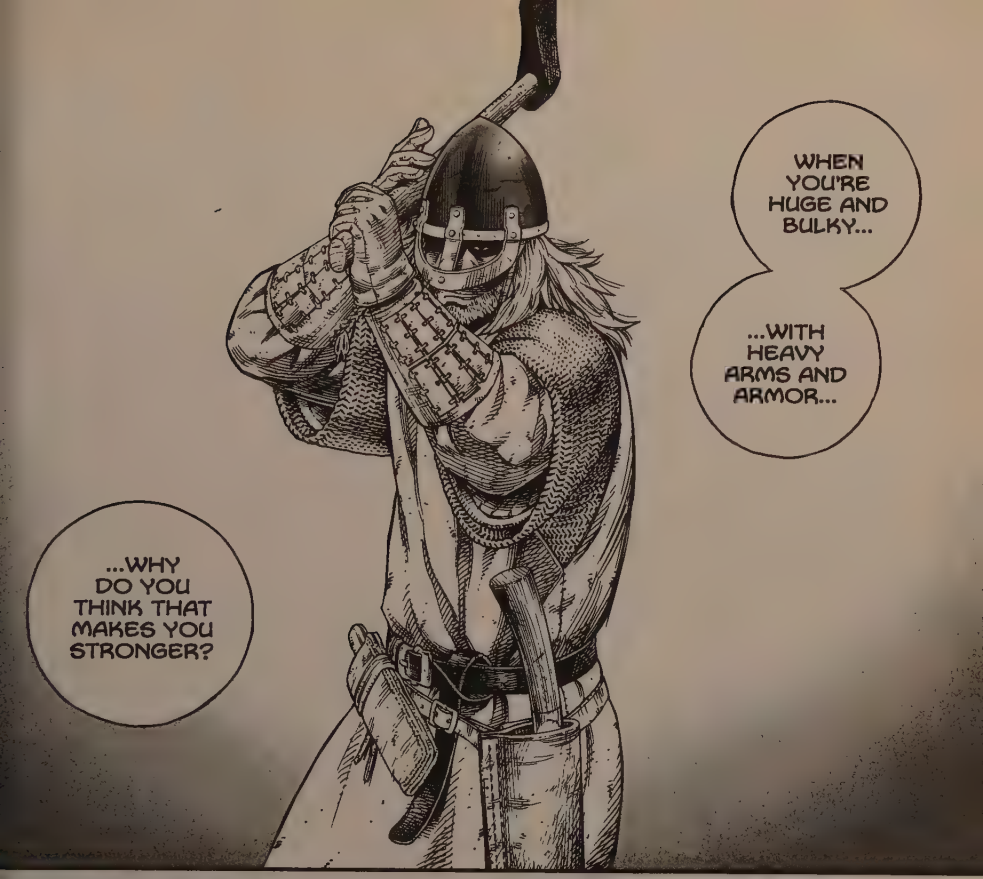
...
YOU MAY USE THIS.

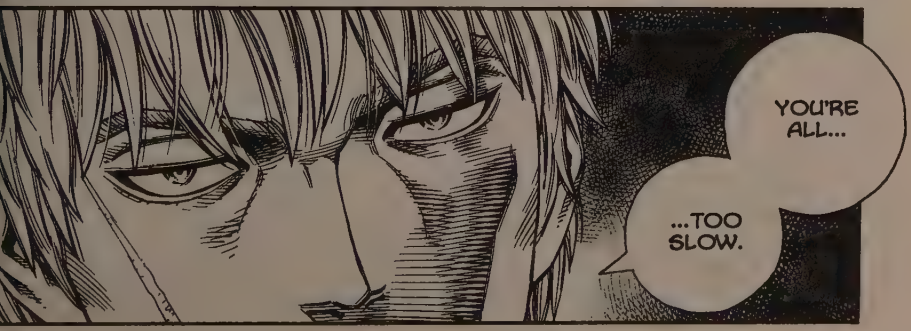


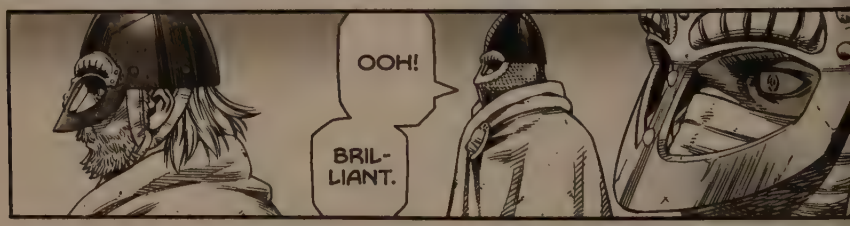

THUD
THERE IS NO GLORY IN DEFEATING YOU UNARMED.

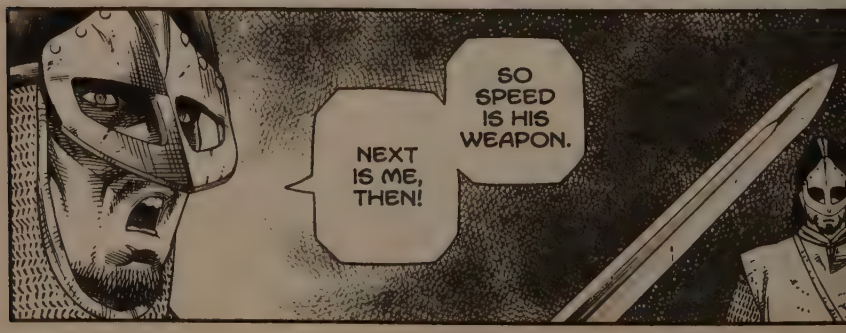

IF WE SEEK GLORY TODAY, LEAVE IT TO ME.
IT IS A DISGRACE FOR JOMSVIKINGS TO CHARGE A SINGLE MAN AS A GROUP.
INDEED.
I'LL ALLOW IT.

TUP
VMM
KEAH!
BWOW
?!

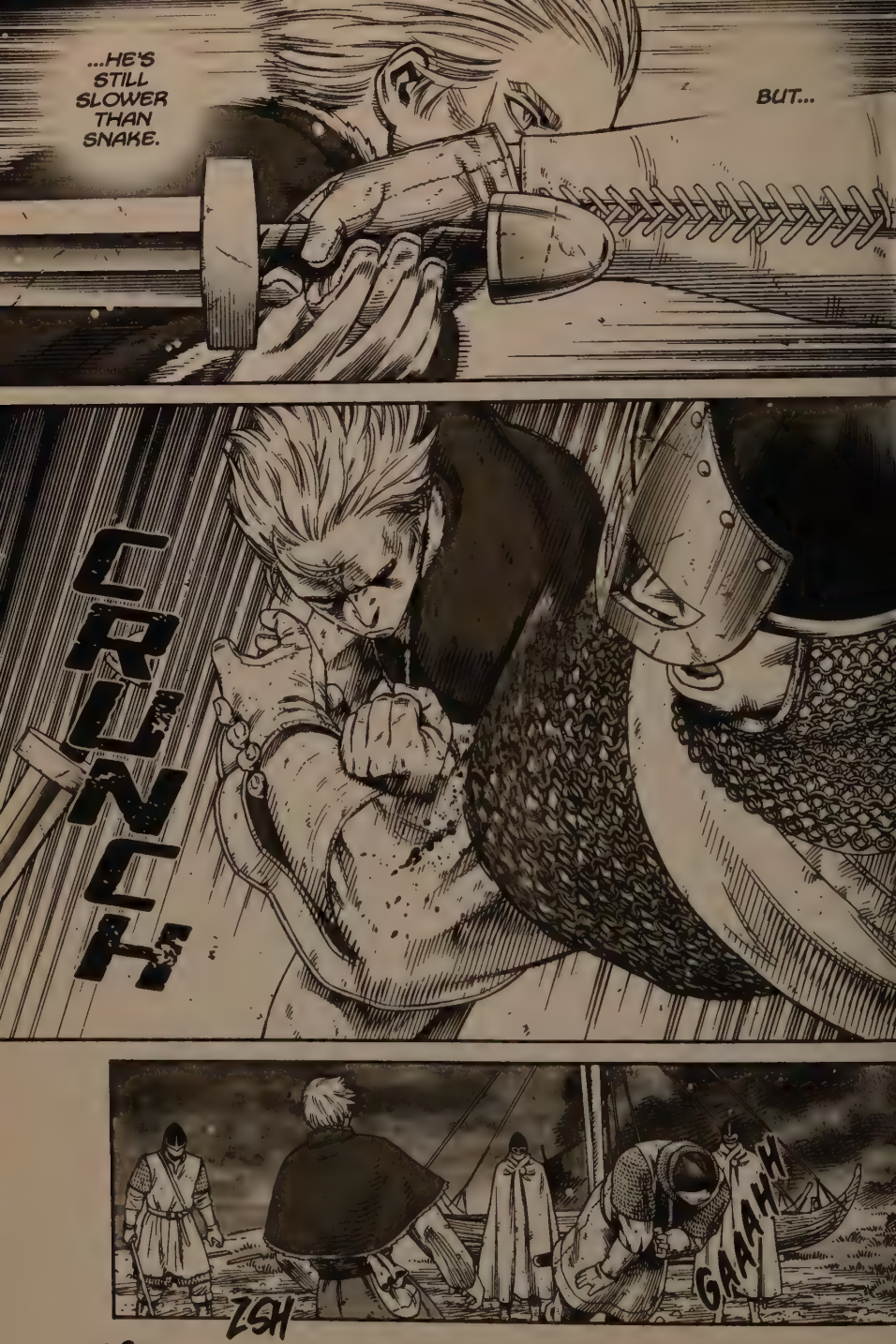

WHEN YOU'RE HUGE AND BULKY...
...WITH HEAVY ARMS AND ARMOR...
...WHY DO YOU THINK THAT MAKES YOU STRONGER?

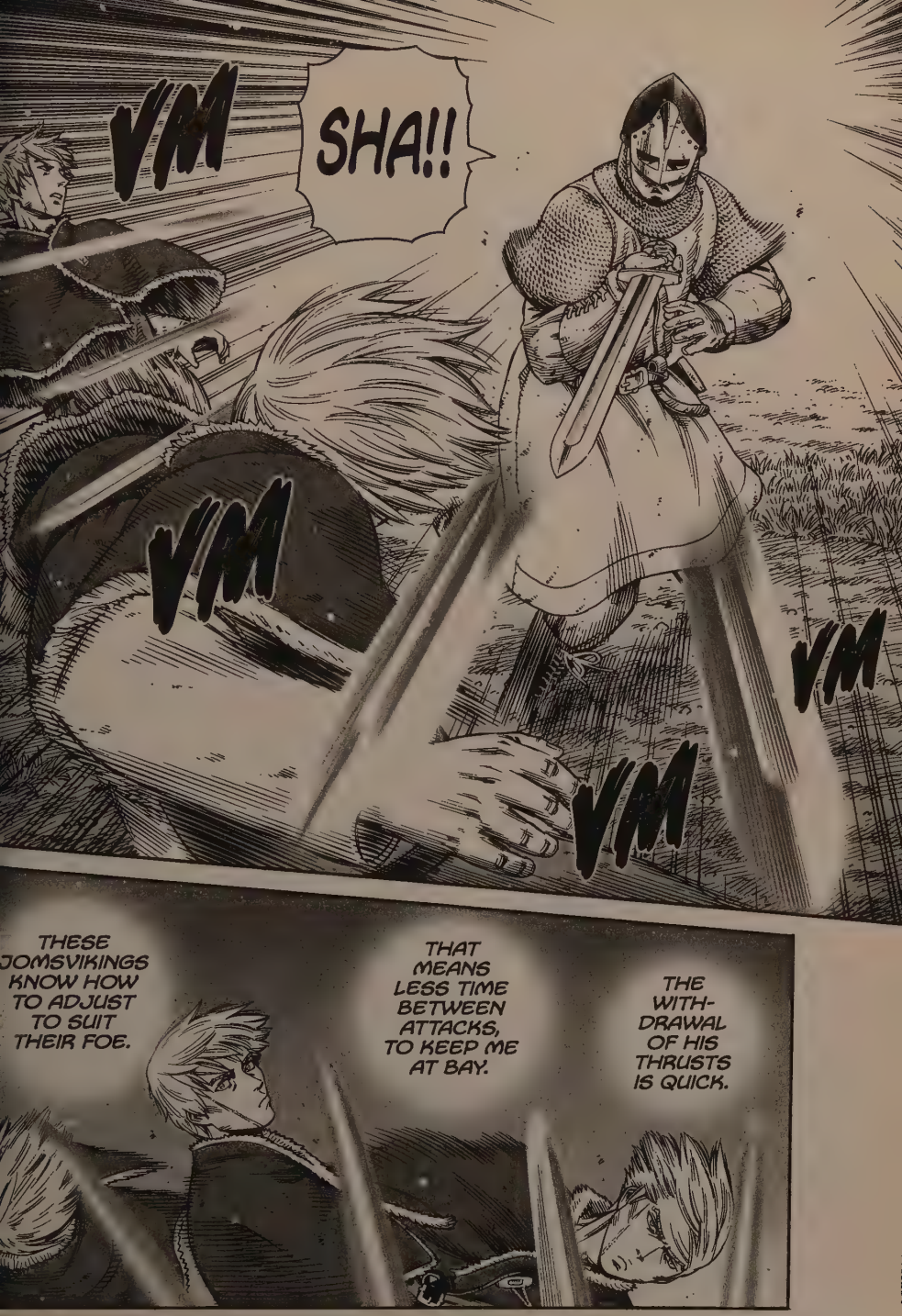

YOU'RE ALL...
...TOO SLOW.

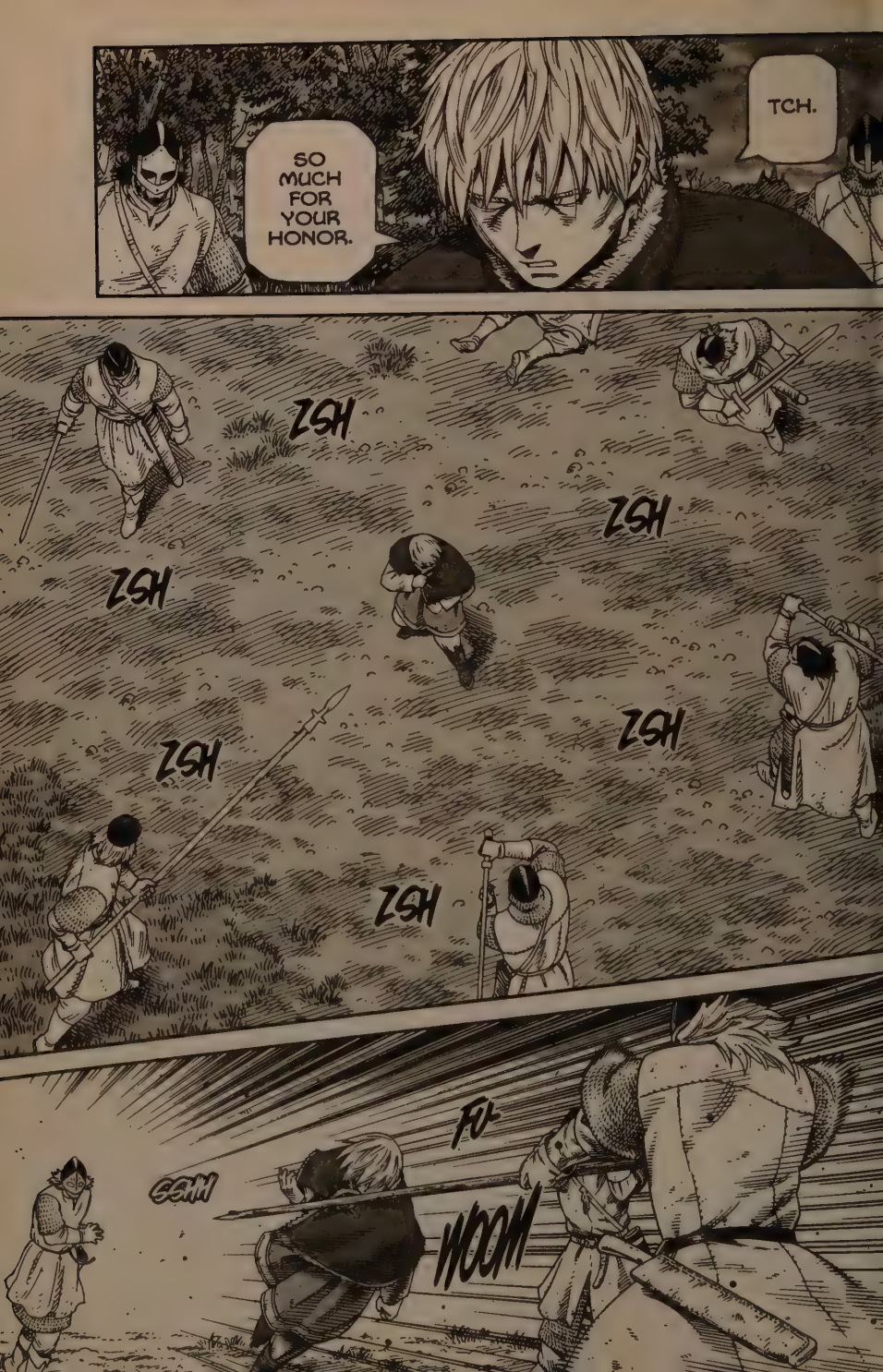

OOH!
BRIL-
LIANT.


SO
SPEED
IS HIS
WEAPON.
NEXT
IS ME,
THEN!

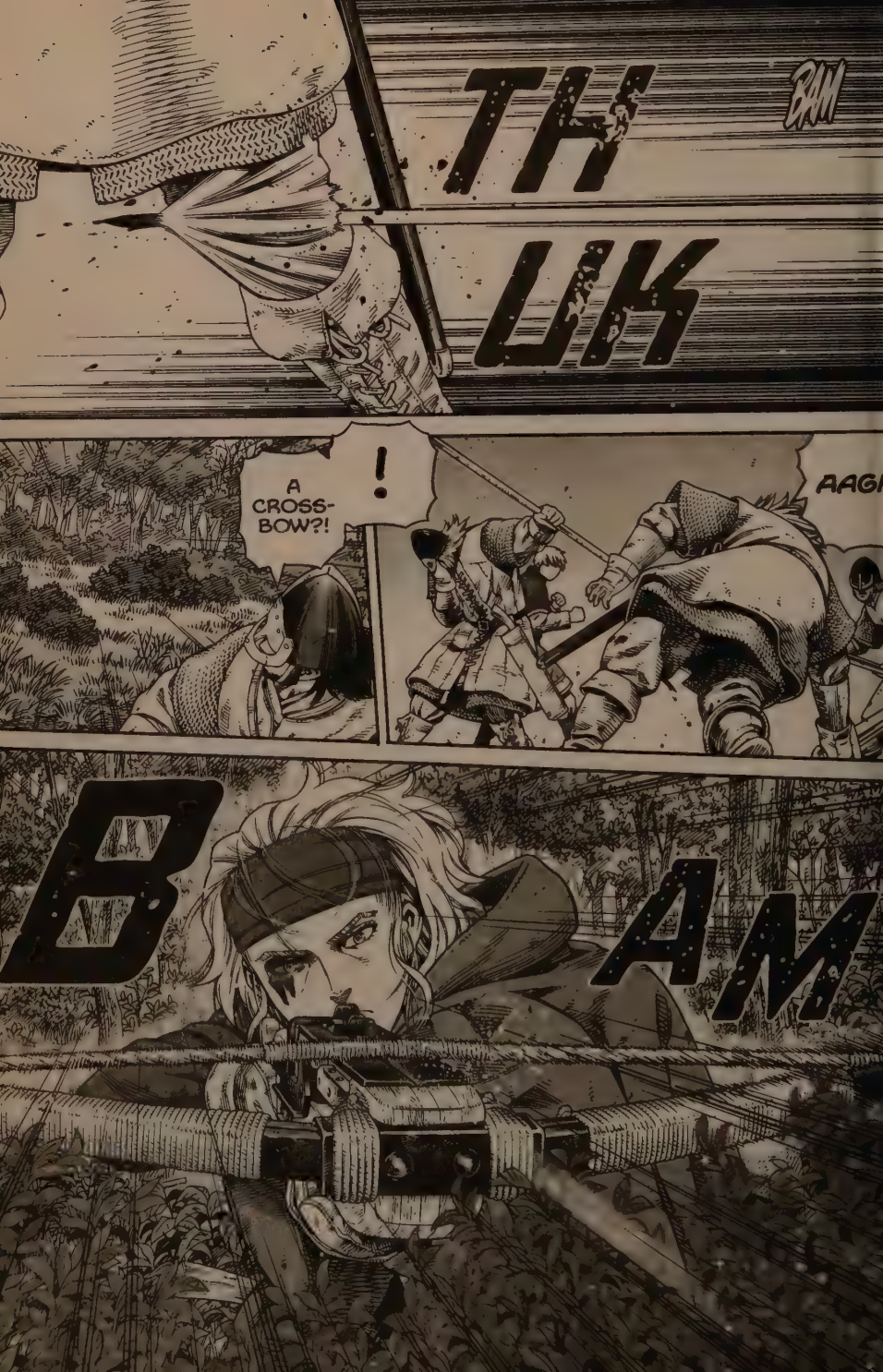
THUD

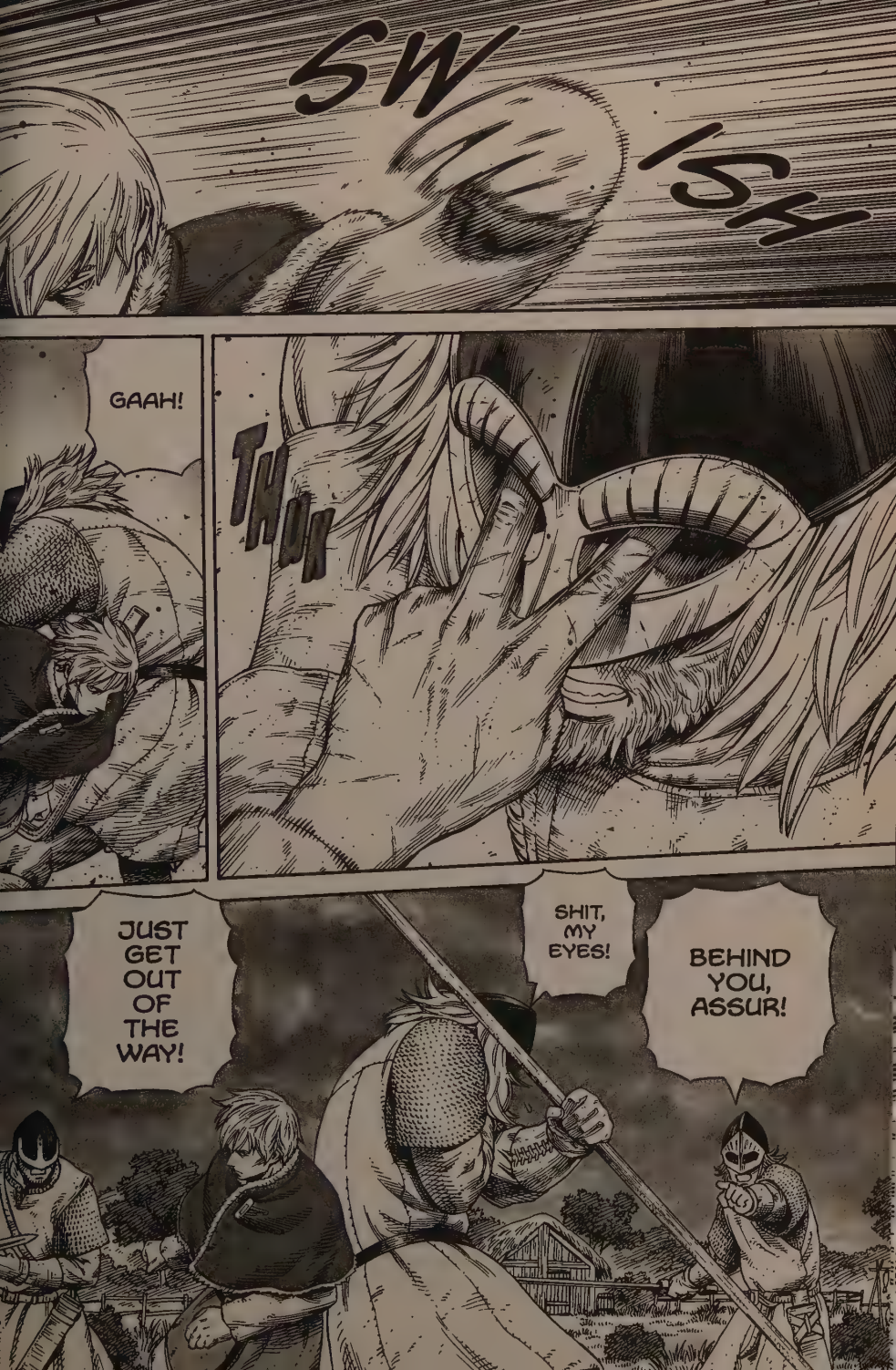

...HE'S STILL SLOWER THAN SNAKE.
BUT...
CRUNCH
ZSH
GAAAH


VM
SHA!!
VM
VM
VM
THESE JOMSVIKINGS KNOW HOW TO ADJUST TO SUIT THEIR FOE.
THAT MEANS LESS TIME BETWEEN ATTACKS, TO KEEP ME AT BAY.
THE WITH-DRAWAL OF HIS THRUSTS IS QUICK.


SO MUCH FOR YOUR HONOR.
TCH.
ZSH
ZSH
ZSH
ZSH
ZSH
ZSH
SSHH
FU-
WOOH

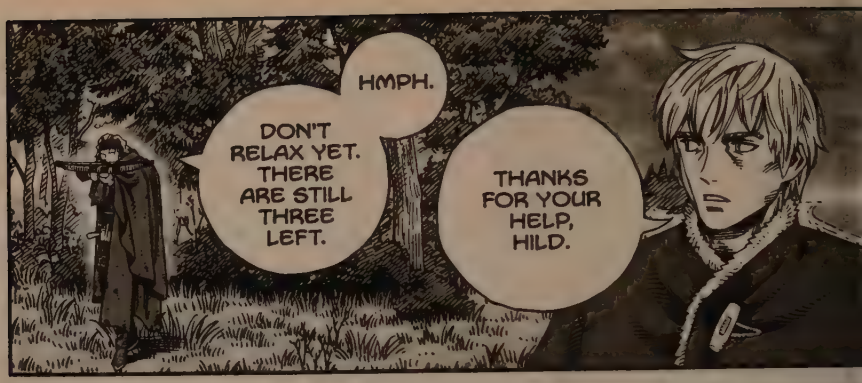
WHO'S NEXT?
FINISH HIM OFF HERE AND NOW!!
CHARGE HIM AS A GROUP!!

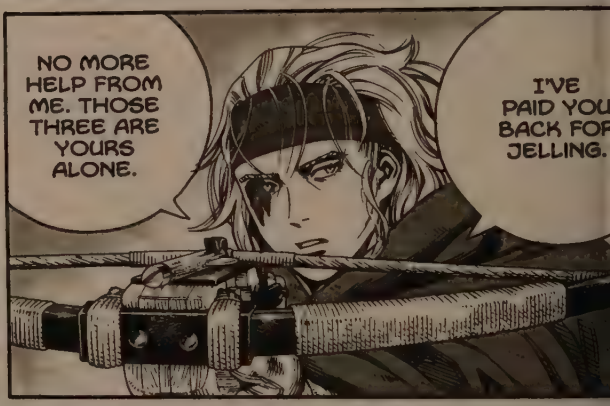

BAM
TH
UK
A CROSS-BOW?!
!
AAGH
BAM

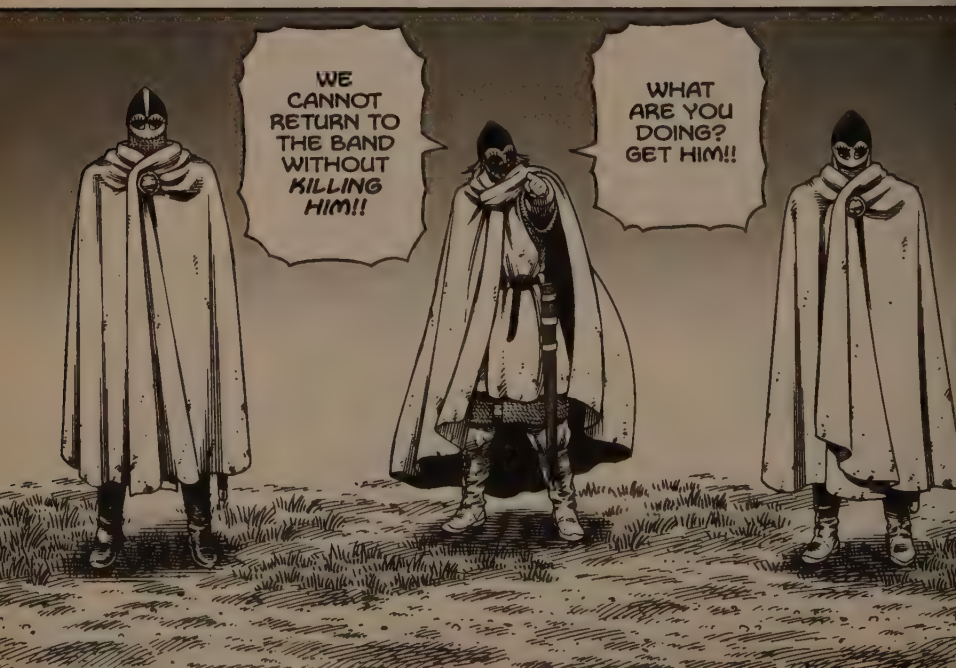

SW
ISH
GAAH!
THUK
JUST GET OUT OF THE WAY!
SHIT, MY EYES!
BEHIND YOU, ASSUR!

BSHT
SHIT!
THUKK
THAP

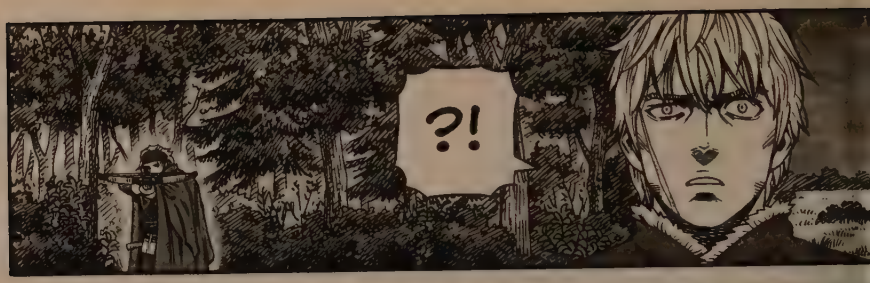
KWOOM
FROM BEHIND ?!
WHOA!
STOP IT, ASSUR!
KAPANG


HMPH.
DON'T RELAX YET. THERE ARE STILL THREE LEFT.
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, HILD.

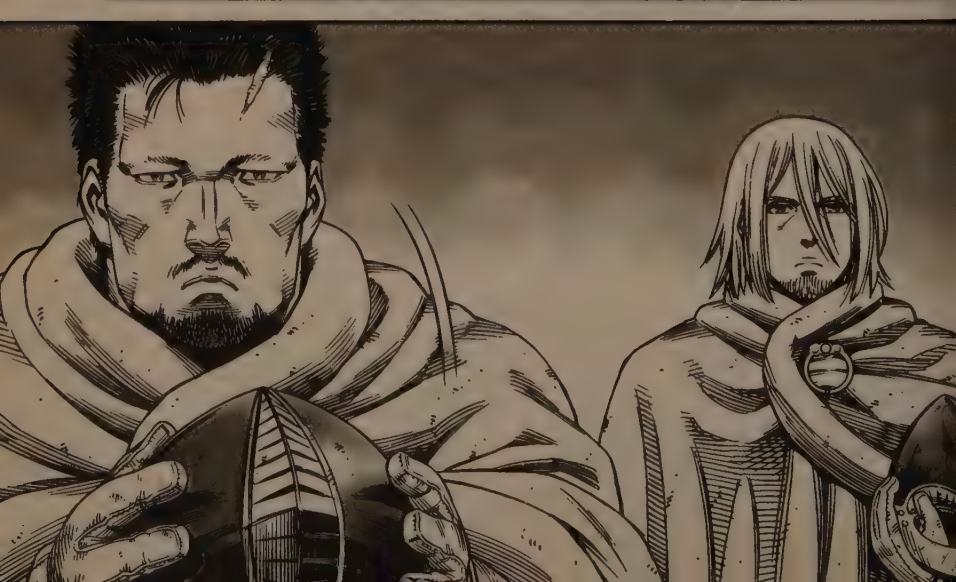

NO MORE HELP FROM ME. THOSE THREE ARE YOURS ALONE.
I'VE PAID YOU BACK FOR JELLING.

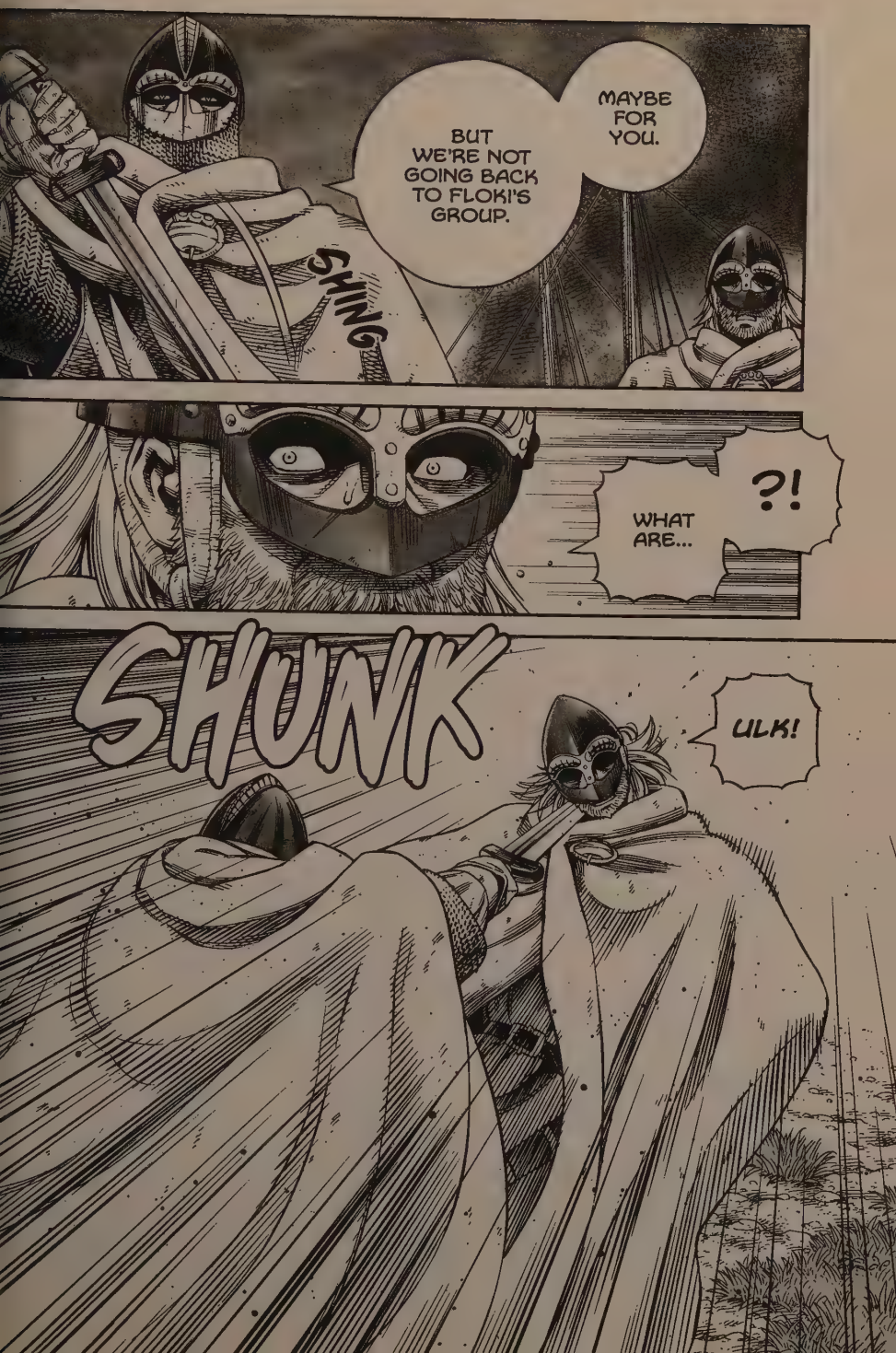

WE CANNOT RETURN TO THE BAND WITHOUT *KILLING HIM!!*
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? GET HIM!!

THUD
EVEN BETTER THAN I EX-PECTED.
YES.
INCREDI-BLE...
DAMN YOU...
...

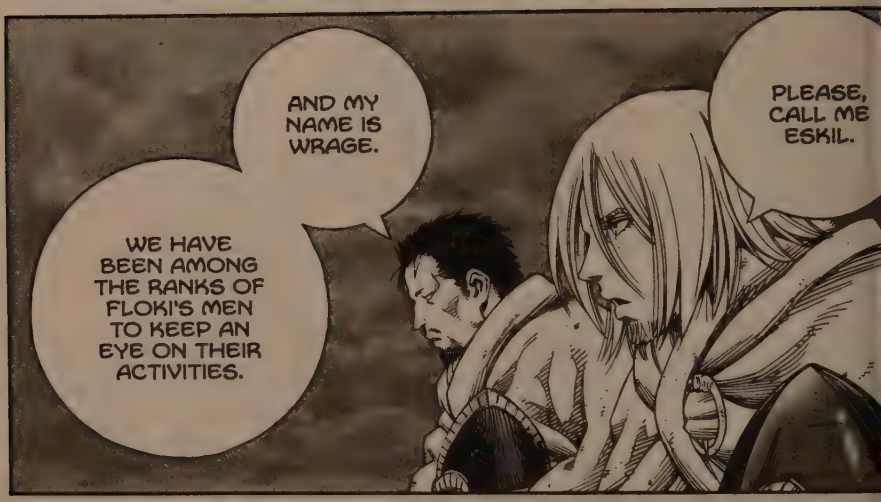

?!

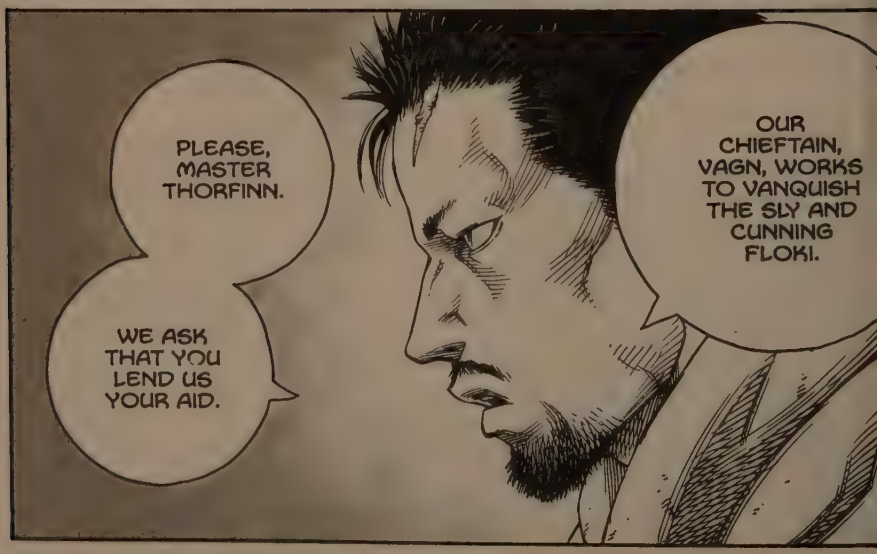
SHAK...
SHKK...

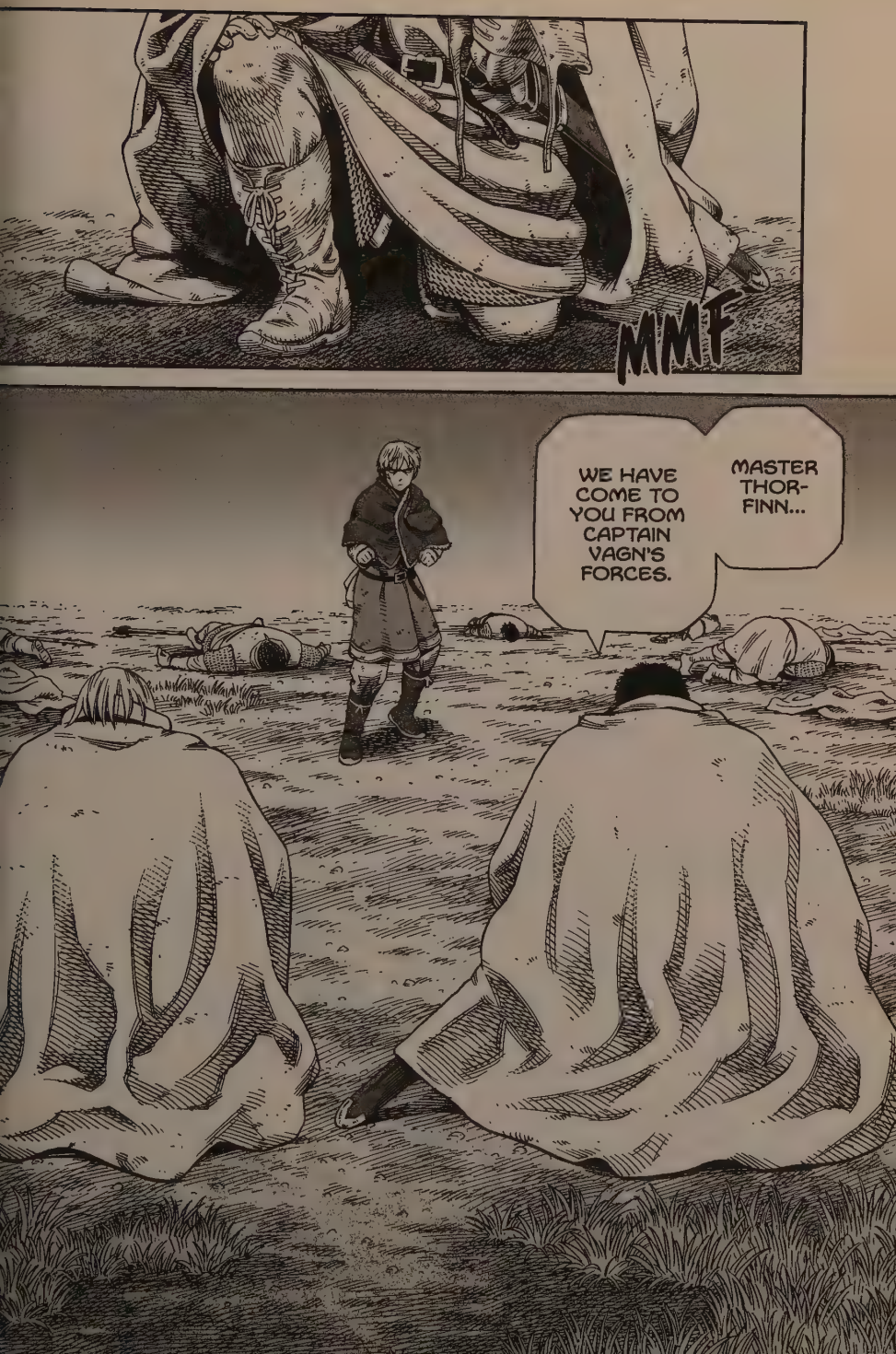


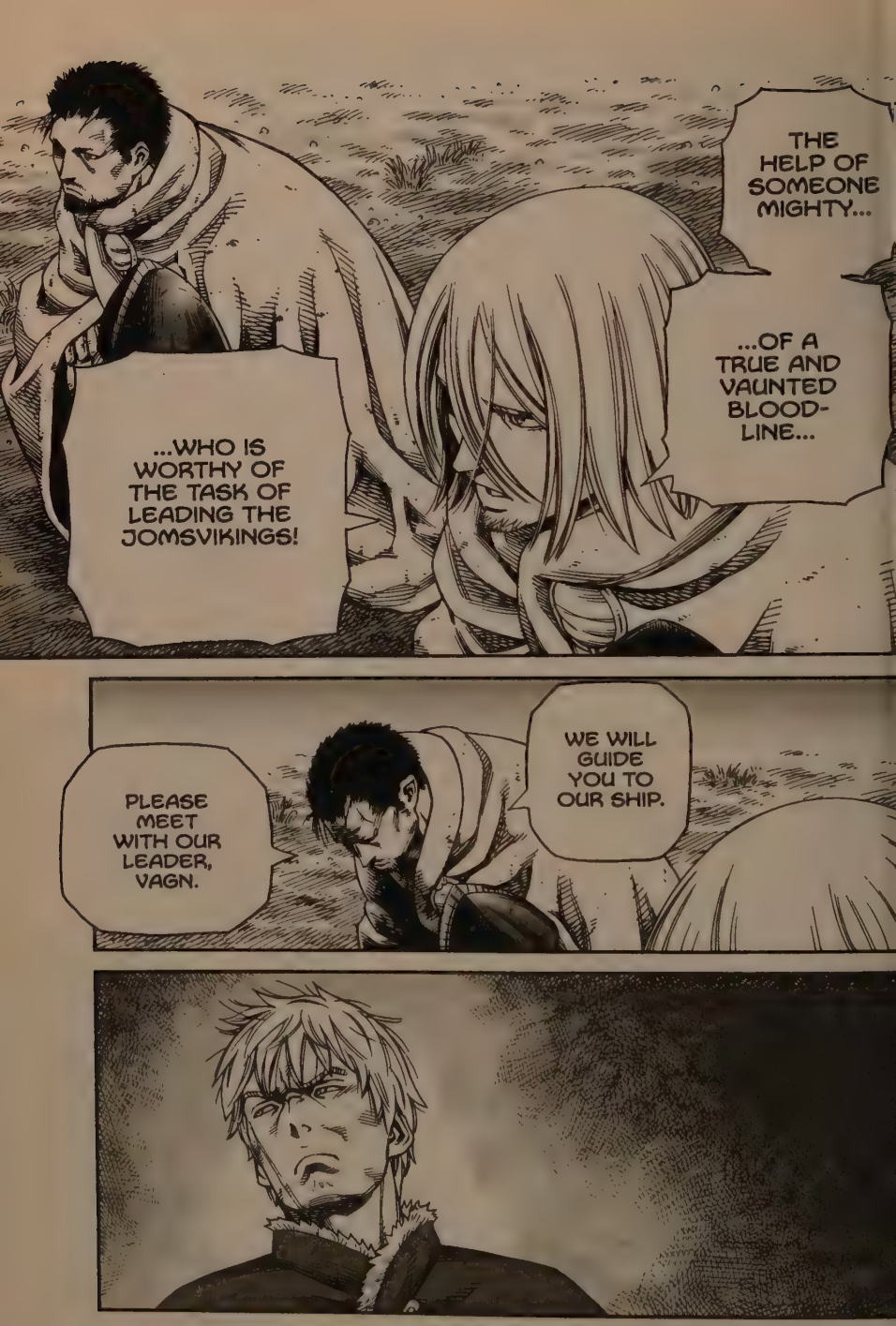

BUT WE'RE NOT GOING BACK TO FLOKI'S GROUP.
MAYBE FOR YOU.
SHING
WHAT ARE...
?!
SHUNK
ULK!

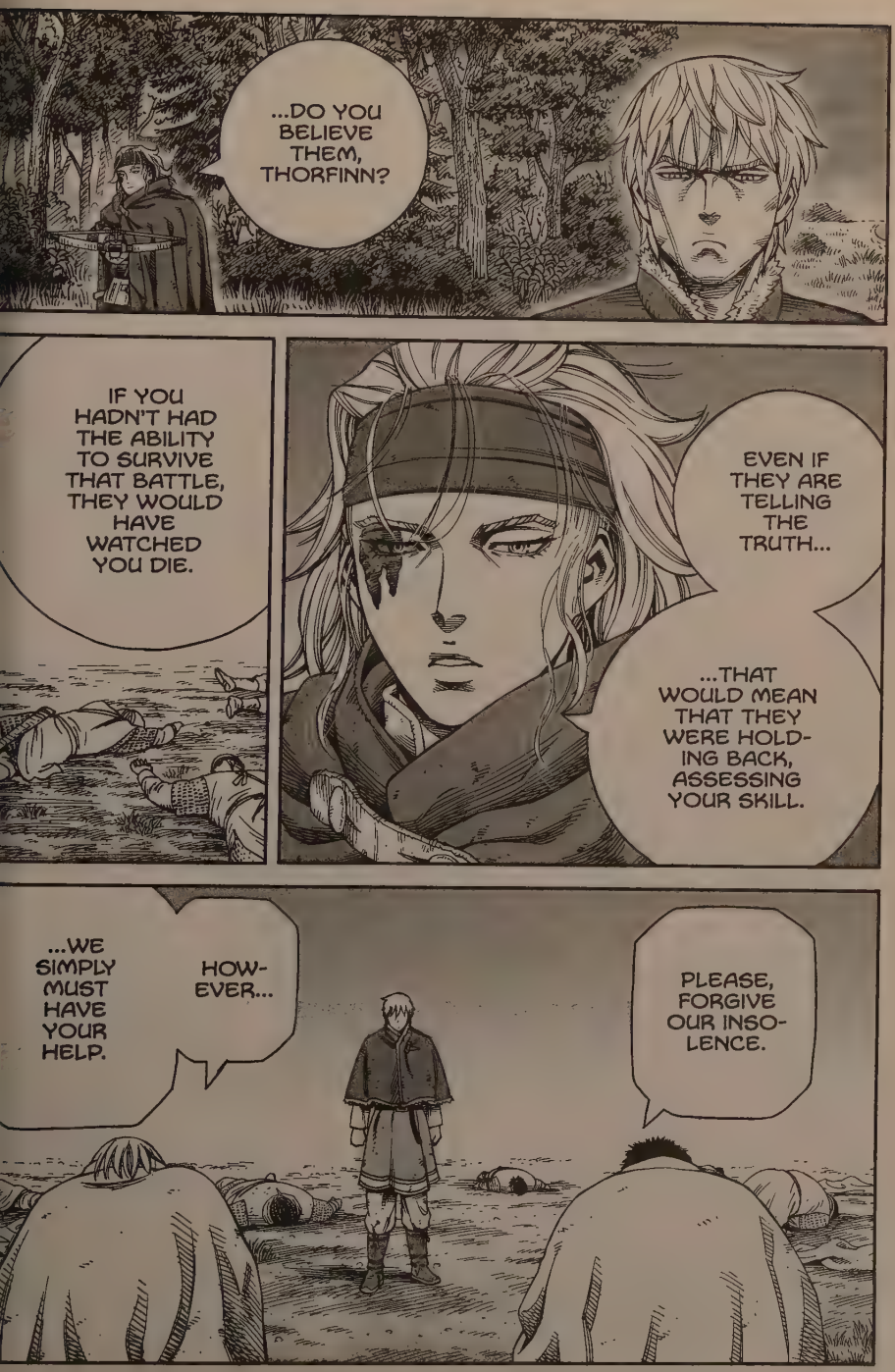
...
VAGN?


AND MY NAME IS WRAGE.
PLEASE, CALL ME ESKIL.
WE HAVE BEEN AMONG THE RANKS OF FLOKI'S MEN TO KEEP AN EYE ON THEIR ACTIVITIES.

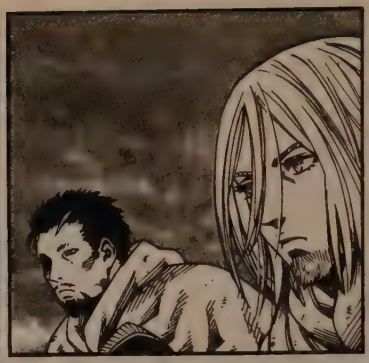

PLEASE, MASTER THORFINN.
OUR CHIEFTAIN, VAGN, WORKS TO VANQUISH THE SLY AND CUNNING FLOKI.
WE ASK THAT YOU LEND US YOUR AID.

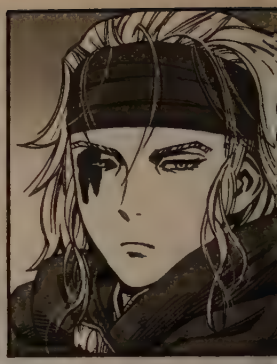

MMF
WE HAVE COME TO YOU FROM CAPTAIN VAGN'S FORCES.
MASTER THOR-FINN...


THE HELP OF SOMEONE MIGHTY...
...OF A TRUE AND VAUNTED BLOOD-LINE...
...WHO IS WORTHY OF THE TASK OF LEADING THE JOMSVIKINGS!
WE WILL GUIDE YOU TO OUR SHIP.
PLEASE MEET WITH OUR LEADER, VAGN.

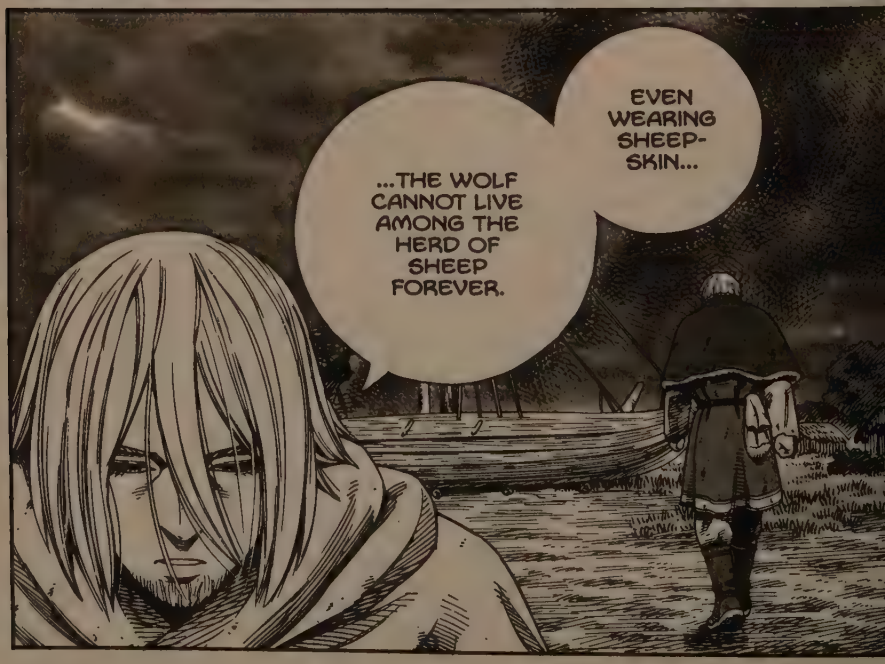

...DO YOU BELIEVE THEM, THORFINN?
IF YOU HADN'T HAD THE ABILITY TO SURVIVE THAT BATTLE, THEY WOULD HAVE WATCHED YOU DIE.
EVEN IF THEY ARE TELLING THE TRUTH...
...THAT WOULD MEAN THAT THEY WERE HOLDING BACK, ASSESSING YOUR SKILL.
...WE SIMPLY MUST HAVE YOUR HELP.
HOWEVER...
PLEASE, FORGIVE OUR INSOLENCE.

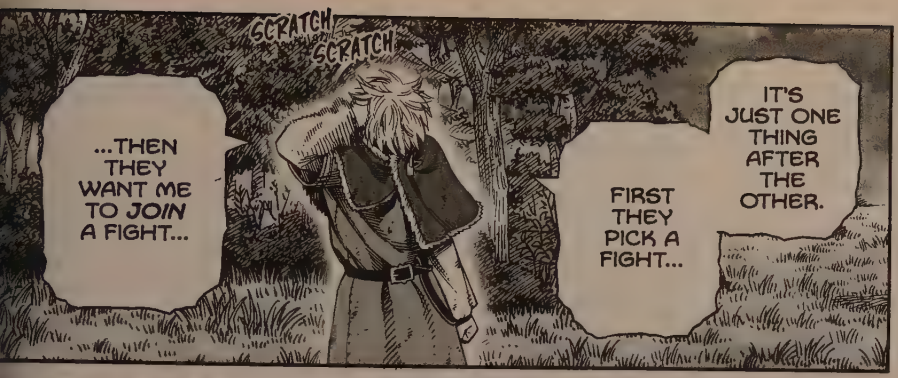
PHEW

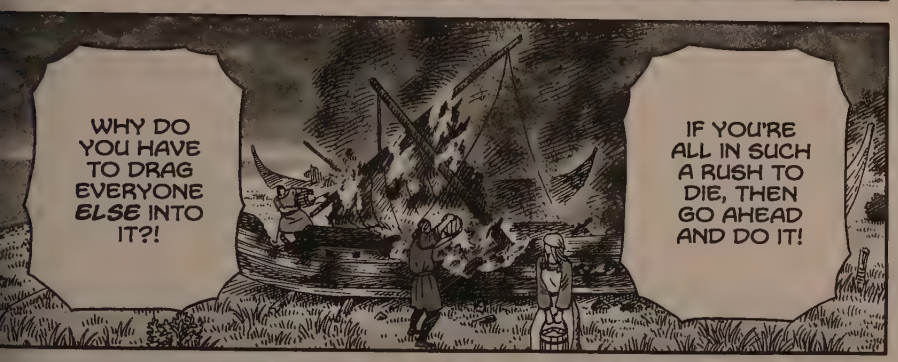


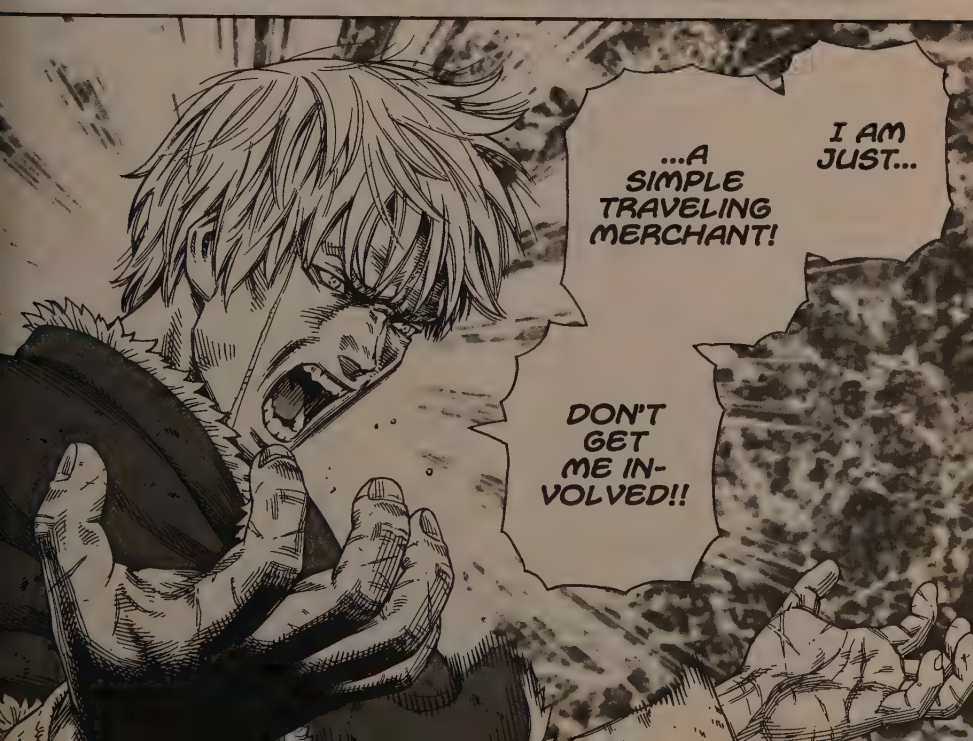


LET'S GO, HILD.

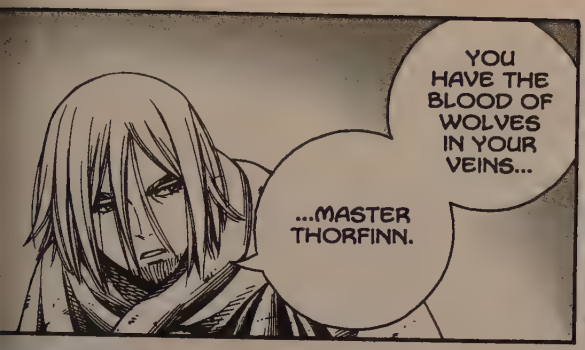

EVEN WEARING SHEEP-SKIN...
...THE WOLF CANNOT LIVE AMONG THE HERD OF SHEEP FOREVER.

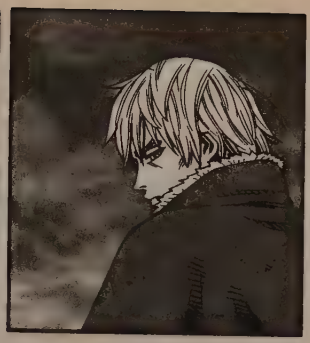

SCRATCH SCRATCH
...THEN THEY WANT ME TO *JOIN* A FIGHT...
FIRST THEY PICK A FIGHT...
IT'S JUST ONE THING AFTER THE OTHER.

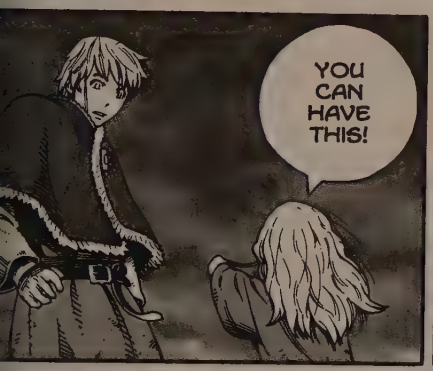

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO DRAG EVERYONE *ELSE* INTO IT?!
IF YOU'RE ALL IN SUCH A RUSH TO DIE, THEN GO AHEAD AND DO IT!

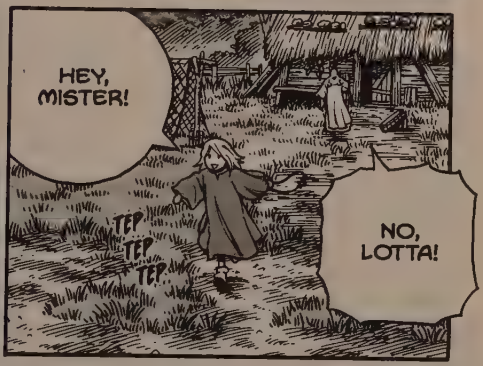

I AM JUST...
...A SIMPLE TRAVELING MERCHANT!
DON'T GET ME IN-VOLVED!!

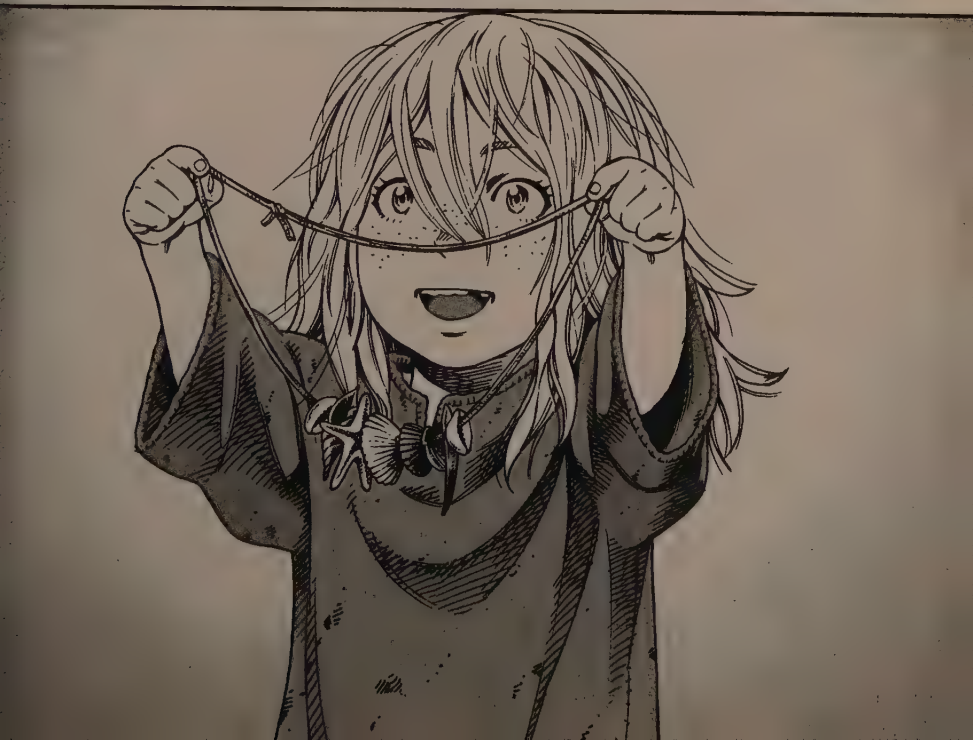
...
RIP
THANK...

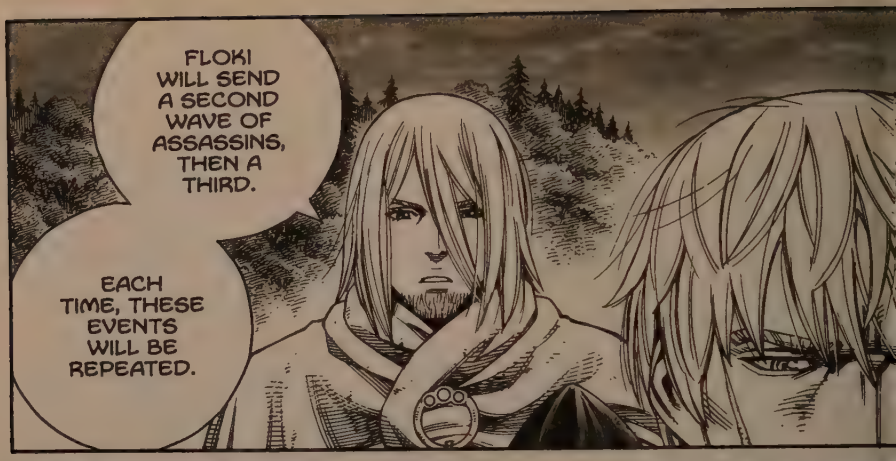

YOU HAVE THE BLOOD OF WOLVES IN YOUR VEINS...
...MASTER THORFINN.

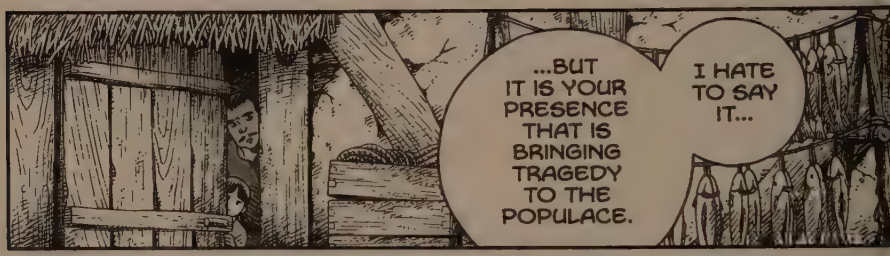


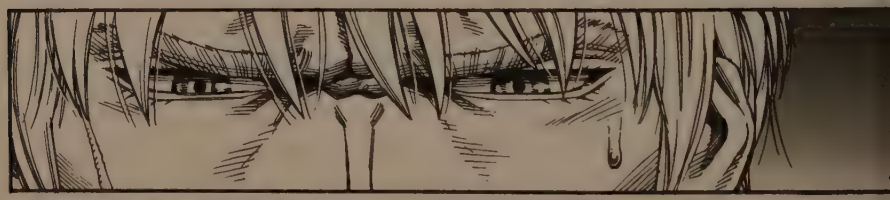

YOU CAN HAVE THIS!


HEY, MISTER!
TEP TEP TEP
NO, LOTTA!




FLOKI WILL SEND A SECOND WAVE OF ASSASSINS, THEN A THIRD.
EACH TIME, THESE EVENTS WILL BE REPEATED.


...BUT IT IS YOUR PRESENCE THAT IS BRINGING TRAGEDY TO THE POPULACE.
I HATE TO SAY IT...



PLEASE USE OUR WARSHIP, MASTER THORFINN.
IT WOULD BE BEST FOR THESE COMMON FOLK.

SHE'S JUST A CHILD! SHE DOESN'T UNDER-STAND WHAT SHE'S DOING!!

I'M SORRY!! I'M SO SORRY, M'LORD!! FORGIVE US!!

MOMMY, THAT HURTS!

AAAGH!

HAVE MERCY...

APPARENT-LY THIS PEASANT WOMAN...

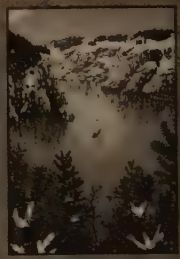
...CAN SEE THROUGH YOU TO YOUR TRUE NATURE.

VINLAND SAGA MAP

THORFINN'S TRAVELS

NEAR BERGEN

Thorfinn dueled Hild, a hunter who smolders for vengeance, and had to rest here to recover from his five crossbow wounds. To the south is the "Calm Fjord," the place that Hild's father Hrafnkell once lived. Eight years ago, as a member of Askeladd's band, Thorfinn raided the settlement and killed Hrafnkell.



HRAFNKELL

Greenland

Arctic Circle

Iceland

Faroes

Shetland

Bergen

Norway

Sweden

Jelling

Jomsborg

North Sea

Denmark

York

England

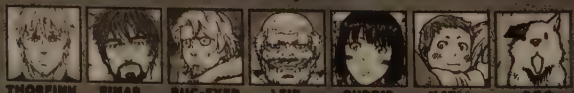
London

Atlantic Ocean

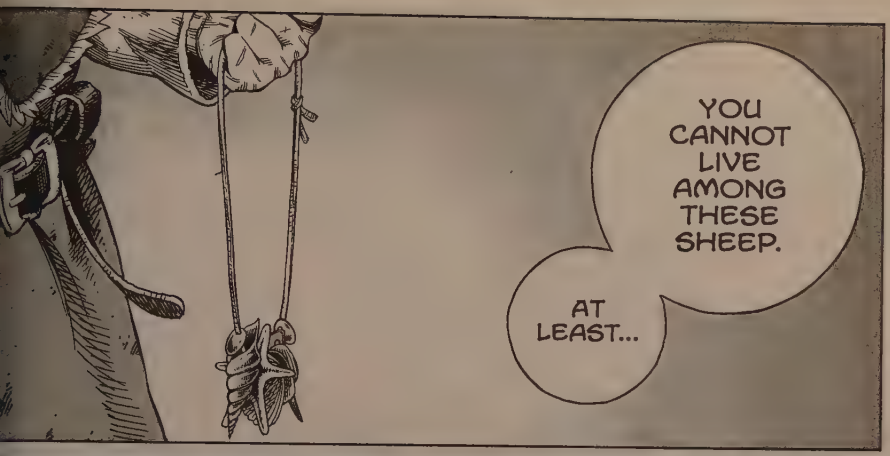
France

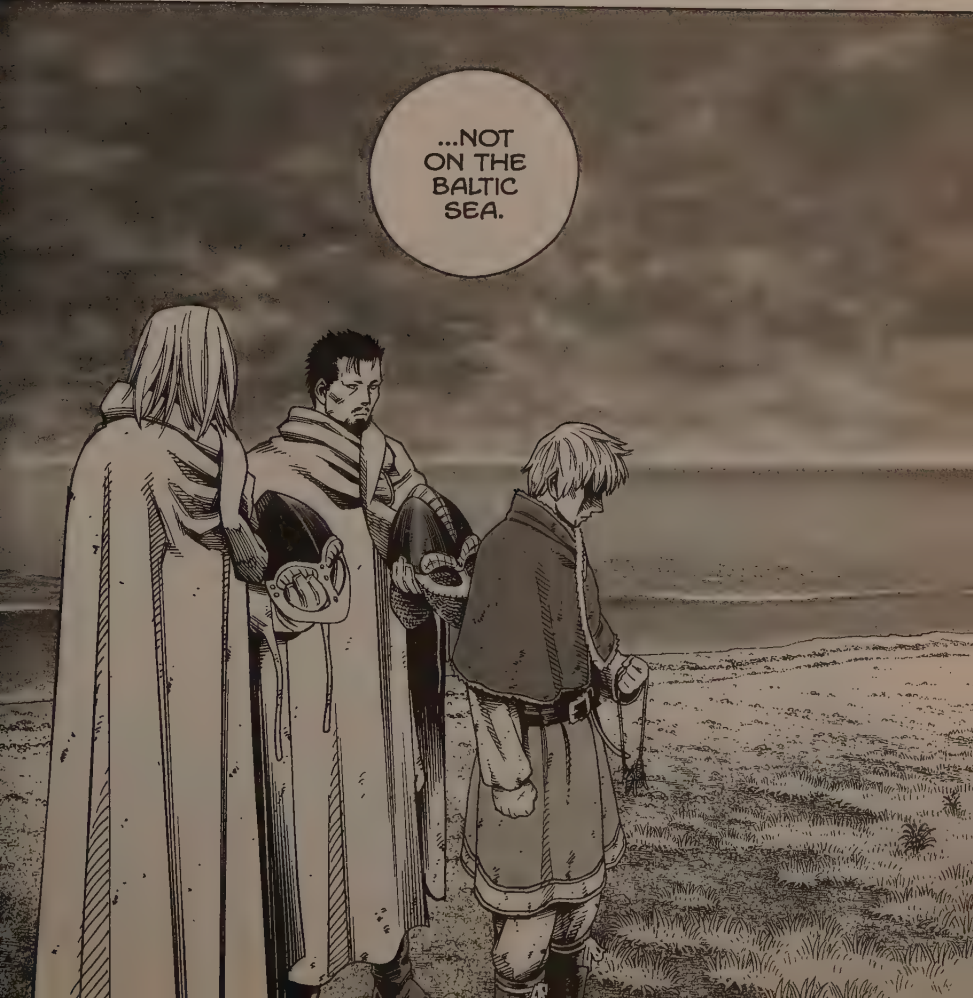
JELLING

Thorfinn's party travels to distant Greece in the east to sell their valuable narwhal horns and fund their trip to create a nation of peace in Vinland. They stop here to buy rations to last them along their route. Jelling happens to be where the Danish king resides, as well as Thorfinn's great-uncle, the war-seeking Thorkell.



THORFINN · EINAR · BUG-EYED THORFINN · LEIF · GUDRID · KARLI · DOG

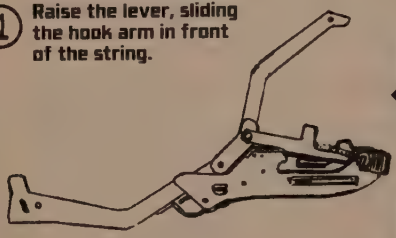

YOU CANNOT LIVE AMONG THESE SHEEP.
AT LEAST...

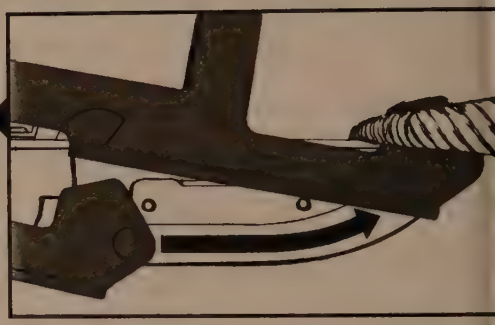

...NOT ON THE BALTIC SEA.

THE CLICKING MECHANISM

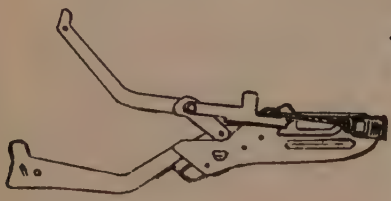
Thanks to this loading system, Hild needs only 40 pounds of pressure to nock the string to 200 pounds of tension. It can also fire up to twenty times in a minute! Awesome! The drawbacks are its weight and the intense upkeep required.

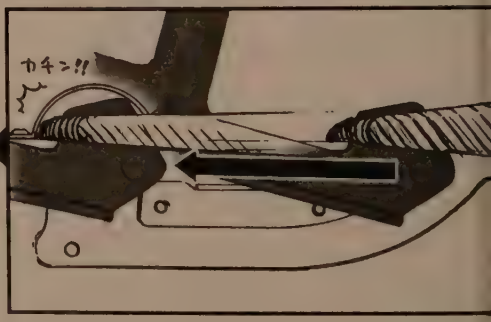
1. Raise the lever, sliding the hook arm in front of the string.



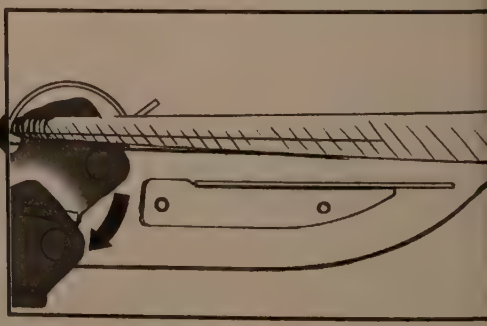


2. When the lever is pulled back to this position, it draws the string back to the release nut [the catch].





3. The release nut automatically locks in place, holding the string back. The lever can be returned to its starting position, where the hook arm rests in its slot.



The inner workings of the mechanism to ensure the release nut rotates into loading position are Hild's own invention, and thus are classified.

SPECIAL BONUS:

HILD'S CROSSBOW

Length: about 29 inches
Width (bow span): about 25 inches
Weight: about 6.5 lbs
Max draw weight (pull tension): 200 lbs

SIDE VIEW

Release Nut
Bolt Holding Spring
Arm
Lever
Hook
Grip
Trigger
Belt runner
Stock

BOLT

Leather fletching

TOP VIEW

The structure is metal. The drawstring is Hild's own invention, a combination of several materials such as animal sinew and linen. It is tough, with minimal give.

FRONT VIEW

Translation Notes

Thing, page 261

The name for the assembly of local leaders in Germanic and Norse cultures. The Icelandic Althing is famous for being essentially the oldest active parliament in the world, dating back to 930 AD, but the concept itself was practiced far and wide in Northern Europe, and forms the basis for the English word "thing," as in "matter or "object."

The construction, "__, son of __" pops up a lot, and in eleventh-century Scandinavia, one's parentage was considered an extremely important piece of information. Without an understanding of who has fair claim to an estate or a foundation of power, bloodshed is certain to result. Then again, sometimes it is the fair claim itself that leads to bloodshed. The Icelandic sagas were medieval documents that tracked, in almost obnoxious detail, the lineage of who married whom, and who their children and children's children were. But of course, family ties are important in every culture and every era. Even Thorfinn winds up in trouble due to family ties that he cannot simply ignore. However! Everyone has a mother and father. Then come two grandfathers and grandmothers each. And four great-grandfathers and -grandmothers. If you trace that back ten generations...you'll have 2,046 ancestors, just by direct lineage! And if you include all the cousins and family branches, you can have an enormous number of distant relatives, just within a ten-generation span! It's amazing. Perhaps that person you walk past on the street is actually a fairly close relative. Maybe you and I are second cousins. No, really. We're all related. Let's all get along.

MAKOTO YUKIMURA

VINLAND SAGA

animal, and I've always wanted to draw it at least once. Drawing a bear means the art will be nice and flashy, but it's worth depicting specifically because of how it symbolizes a brute strength that cannot be reasoned with. One day, it just hit me that the way each character interacts with the bear can reflect how they deal with violence. Thorfinn would want to escape, but if that's not possible, he would try very hard to only counter the bear. Hild, in order to survive, would think up a method of attack that goes beyond the bear's abilities. Thorkill would fool around and tease the bear for his own amusement, and then kill it. From the bear's perspective, it's quite troublesome to have to deal with humans at all.

Iceland's terns are well known as the birds that fly the longest distances in the world. In the summer, they lay eggs in the Arctic regions. Later in the year, during the winter, they fly to Antarctica. They're migratory birds with extraordinary vitality. Actually, researching terns helped me really solidify Gudrid's character. She's truly "a tethered tern."

What I'll be drawing next is not yet fixed, but I think I'll be drawing lots of wildlife. Not just animals, plants too. There may be lots of new flora and fauna in Vinland—the likes of which Thorfinn and his crew have never seen before. I'm very excited to draw them!

Kodansha Comics: *You've shared with us previously that you wanted to create a new type of shonen hero who does not use violence to solve all of his problems. Of course, the character drama has remained very tense and engaging even in these later chapters, but were you concerned that, once the story began to focus more on Thorfinn's pacifism, readers would miss the exciting action from earlier in the series?*

Yukimura: Absolutely. I've been worried about that since the arc

ASK YUKIMURA

Kodansha Comics: *In your afterwords, you often delve into the extensive research you performed for* Vinland Saga. *Have you begun to see anything in your everyday life differently since you began drawing the series?*

Yukimura: After receiving this question, I thought long and hard, but it seems there hasn't been much of a change in my own self-awareness or consciousness. *Vinland Saga* started serialization 12 years ago. At that point, I had already wrapped up most of the research and data collection for the series. The general story had also been decided by then, too. So the work that I had planned back then, despite some delays here and there, has been moving along quite smoothly. In regards to the work itself, the daily ins and outs are quite monotonous. When I think back on it, those 12 years really flew by. I was scribbling away at my desk, drawing, and before I knew it, so much time had passed. The way I see things hasn't changed due to *Vinland Saga*'s serialization, but during its serialization, I got married and was graced with three children—*that* really changed my way of thinking and how I lived. One room in my home is an office, so I'm always with my kids. I'm constantly thinking that I have to be a role model for the kids. Back before *Vinland* got serialized, I used to live alone, and compared to those days, my life now is much more proper.

Kodansha Comics: *Wildlife appears in the story often–each animal's individual personality and artwork has enriched the rest of the story. What inspires you to focus on the symbolism of certain animals? Are there other animals you wish you could include?*

Yukimura: Take the bear, for example. It's Europe's strongest land

here Thorfinn became a slave. Well, I planned that since before *inland Saga* was published, so I've been worrying about this issue ince before I drew chapter one. (Laughs.) I even recall that some eople scolded me over social media.

s long as manga is entertainment, I recognize that it is the creator's ob to make something that readers truly want, and can enjoy. A riumphant hero who's super cool in battle—I understand that that's hat the audience desires.

However, I racked my brain over whether or not I could create a ero that's even more awesome than the aforementioned battle-eady protagonist. Then I realized that it's also my job as a creator to y really hard to make this kind of hero. I know this is a bit self-erving, but I secretly hope that you will be sympathetic and read *inland Saga* as partially an experiment in achieving that... Well, if I rite that here, then it's not very secret, is it? (Laughs.)

am illustrating a hero that I believe is awesome, from the bottom of y heart. Perhaps it is unbecoming of an entertainer to be so selfish, ut if my readers can embrace this—well, nothing would make me appier. I'll work hard to be worthy of your continued support.

hat's all for now. I will keep creating and putting forth my best fforts. I am grateful for your continued support going forwards, nd hope you will join me to the end of this journey!

HAPPINESS

ハピネス

By **Shuzo Oshimi**

From the creator of *The Flowers of Evil*

Nothing interesting is happening in Makoto Ozaki's first year of high school. His life is a series of quiet humiliations: low-grade bullies, unreliable friends, and the constant frustration of his adolescent lust. But one night, a pale, thin girl knocks him to the ground in an alley and offers him a choice.

Now everything is different. Daylight is searingly bright. Food tastes awful. And worse than anything is the terrible, consuming thirst...

Praise for Shuzo Oshimi's *The Flowers of Evil*

"A shockingly readable story that vividly—one might even say queasily—evokes the fear and confusion of discovering one's own sexuality. Recommended." —The Manga Critic

"A page-turning tale of sordid middle school blackmail." —Otaku USA Magazine

"A stunning new horror manga." —Third Eye Comics

KODANSHA COMICS

Shuzo Oshimi/Kodansha Ltd. All rights reserved.

"*Parasyte* fans should get a kick out of the chance to revisit Iwaaki's weird, violent, strangely affecting universe. Recommended." -Otaku USA Magazine

"A great anthology containing an excellent variety of genres and styles." -Manga Bookshelf

Based on the critically acclaimed classic horror manga

The first new *Parasyte* manga in over 20 years!

NEO PARASYTE

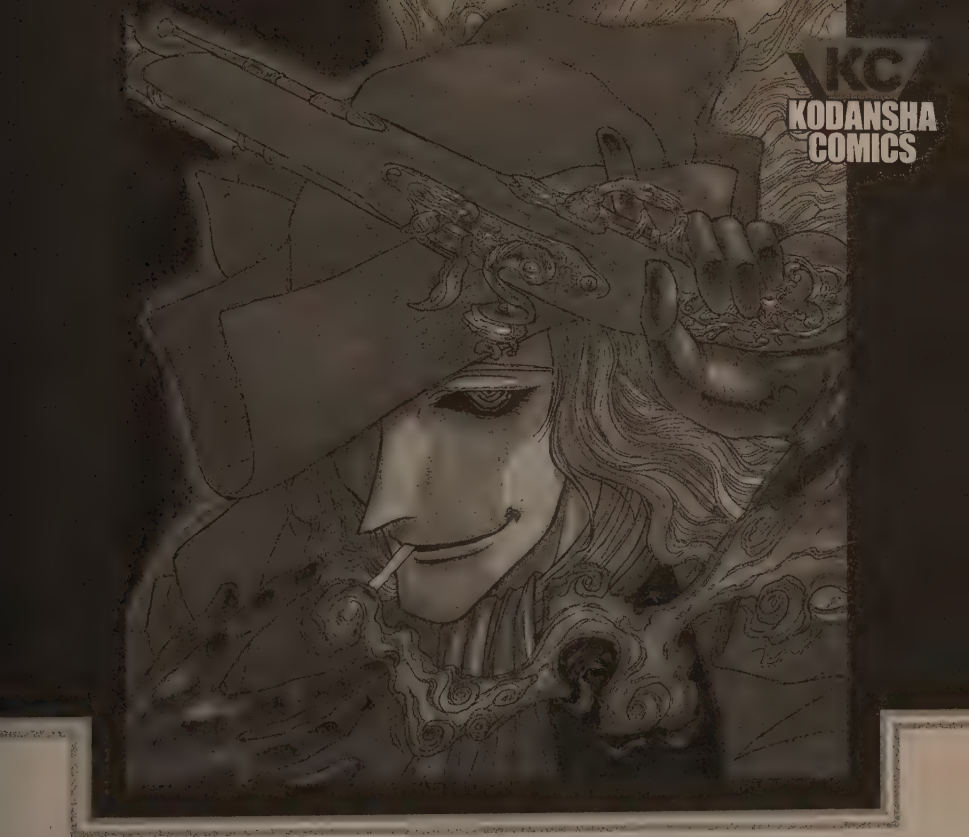
BY ASUMIKO NAKAMURA, EMA TOYAMA, MIKI RINNO, LALAKO KOJIMA, KAORI YUKI, BANKO KUZE, YUUKI OBATA, KASHIO, YUI KUROE, ASIA WATANABE, MIKIMAKI, HIKARU SURUGA, HAJIME SHINJO, RENJURO KINDAICHI, AND YURI NARUSHIMA

A collection of chilling new *Parasyte* stories from Japan's top shojo artists!

Parasites: shape-shifting aliens whose only purpose is to assimilate with and consume the human race... but do these monsters have a different side? A parasite becomes a prince to save his romance-obsessed female host from a dangerous stalker. Another hosts a cooking show, in which the real monsters are revealed. These and 13 more stories, from some of the greatest shojo manga artists alive today, together make up a chilling, funny, and entertaining tribute to one of manga's horror classics!

© Hitoshi Iwaaki, Asumiko Nakamura, Ema Toyama, Miki Rinno, Lalako Kojima, Kaori Yuki, Banko Kuze, Yuuki Obata, Kashio, Yui Kuroe, Asia Watanabe, Mikimaki, Hikaru Suruga, Hajime Shinjo, Renjuro Kindaichi, Yuri Narushima/Kodansha Ltd. All rights reserved.

KODANSHA COMICS



The Black Museum: The Ghost and the Lady

By Kazuhiro Fujita

Deep in Scotland Yard in London sits an evidence room dedicated to the greatest mysteries of British history. In this "Black Museum" sits a misshapen hunk of lead—two bullets fused together—the key to a wartime encounter between Florence Nightingale, the mother of modern nursing, and a supernatural Man in Grey. This story is unknown to most scholars of history, but a special guest of the museum will tell the tale of *The Ghost and the Lady*...

Praise for Kazuhiro Fujita's *Ushio and Tora*

"A charming revival that combines a classic look with modern depth and pacing... **Essential viewing both for curmudgeons and new fans alike.**" — Anime News Network

"**GREAT!** The first episode of *Ushio and Tora* captures the essence of '90s anime." — IGN

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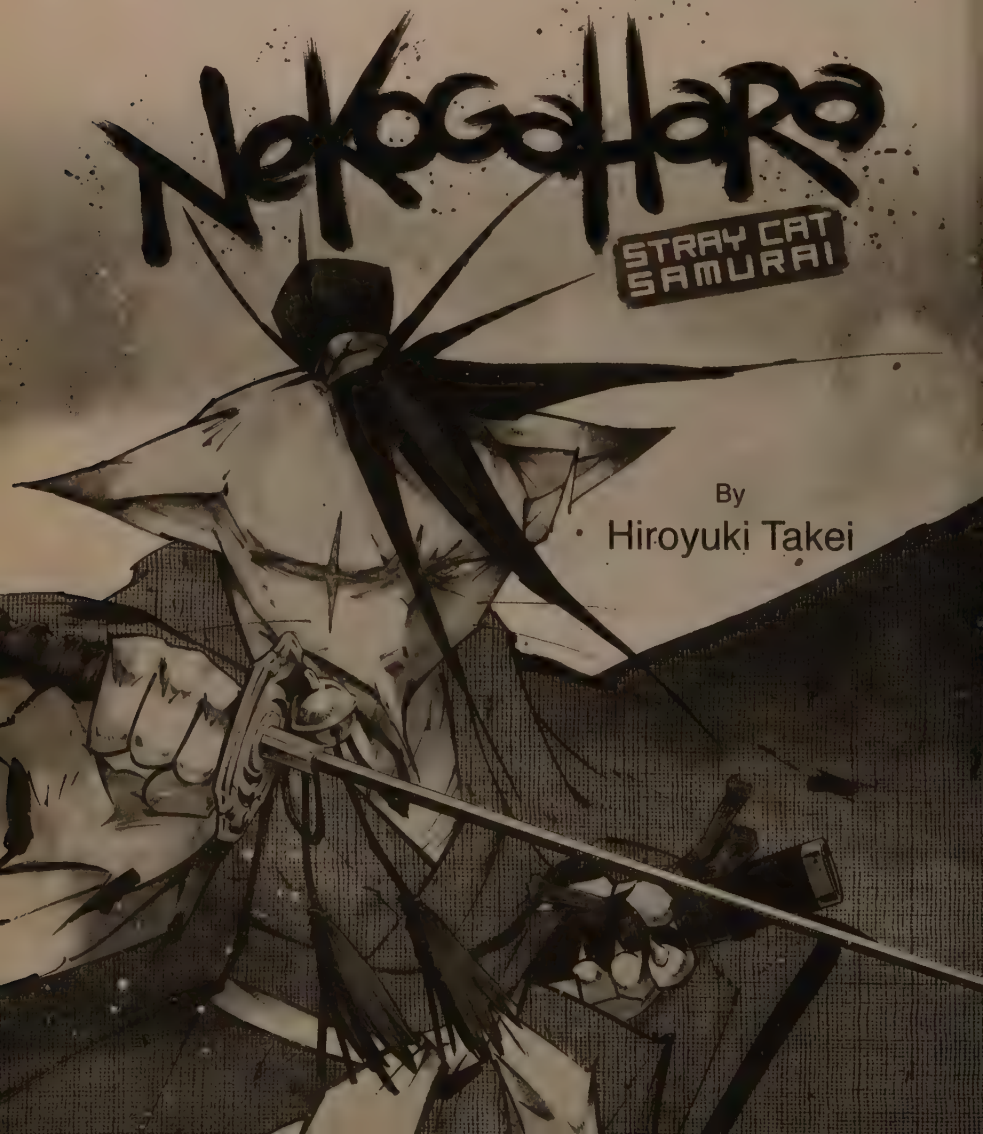
© Hiroyuki Takei/Kodansha Ltd. All rights reserved.

KODANSHA COMICS

New action series from Hiroyuki Takei, creator of the classic shonen franchise Shaman King!

In medieval Japan, a bell hanging on the collar is a sign that a cat has a master. Norachiyo's bell hangs from his katana sheath, but he is nonetheless a stray — a ronin. This one-eyed cat samurai travels across a dishonest world, cutting through pretense and deception with his blade.



Having lost his wife, high school teacher Kōhei Inuzuka is doing his best to raise his young daughter Tsumugi as a single father. He's pretty bad at cooking and doesn't have a huge appetite to begin with, but chance brings his little family together with one of his students, the lonely Kotori. The three of them are anything but comfortable in the kitchen, but the healing power of home cooking might just work on their grieving hearts.

"This season's number-one feel-good anime!" —Anime News Network

"A beautifully-drawn story about comfort food and family and grief. Recommended." —Otaku USA Magazine

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KC KODANSHA COMICS

Japan's most powerful spirit medium delves into the ghost world's greatest mysteries!

Story by Kyo Shirodaira, famed author of mystery fiction and creator of *Spiral*, *Blast of Tempest*, and *The Record of a Fallen Vampire*.

Both touched by spirits called yôkai, Kotoko and Kurô have gained unique superhuman powers. But to gain her powers Kotoko has given up an eye and a leg, and Kurô's personal life is in shambles. So when Kotoko suggests they team up to deal with renegades from the spirit world, Kurô doesn't have many other choices, but Kotoko might just have a few ulterior motives...

IN/SPECTRE

STORY BY KYO SHIRODAIRA
ART BY CHASHIBA KATASE

© Kyo Shirodaira, Chashiba Katase/Kodansha Ltd. All rights reserved.

"An emotional and artistic tour de force! We see incredible triumph, and crushing defeat... each panel [is] a thrill!"
—Anitay

"A journey that's instantly compelling."
—Anime News Network

WELCOME TO THE BALLROOM

By Tomo Takeuchi

Feckless high school student Tatara Fujita wants to be good at something—anything. Unfortunately, he's about as average as a slouchy teen can be. The local bullies know this, and make it a habit to hit him up for cash, but all that changes when the debonair Kaname Sengoku sends them packing. Sengoku's not the neighborhood watch, though. He's a professional ballroom dancer. And once Tatara Fujita gets pulled into the world of ballroom, his life will never be the same.

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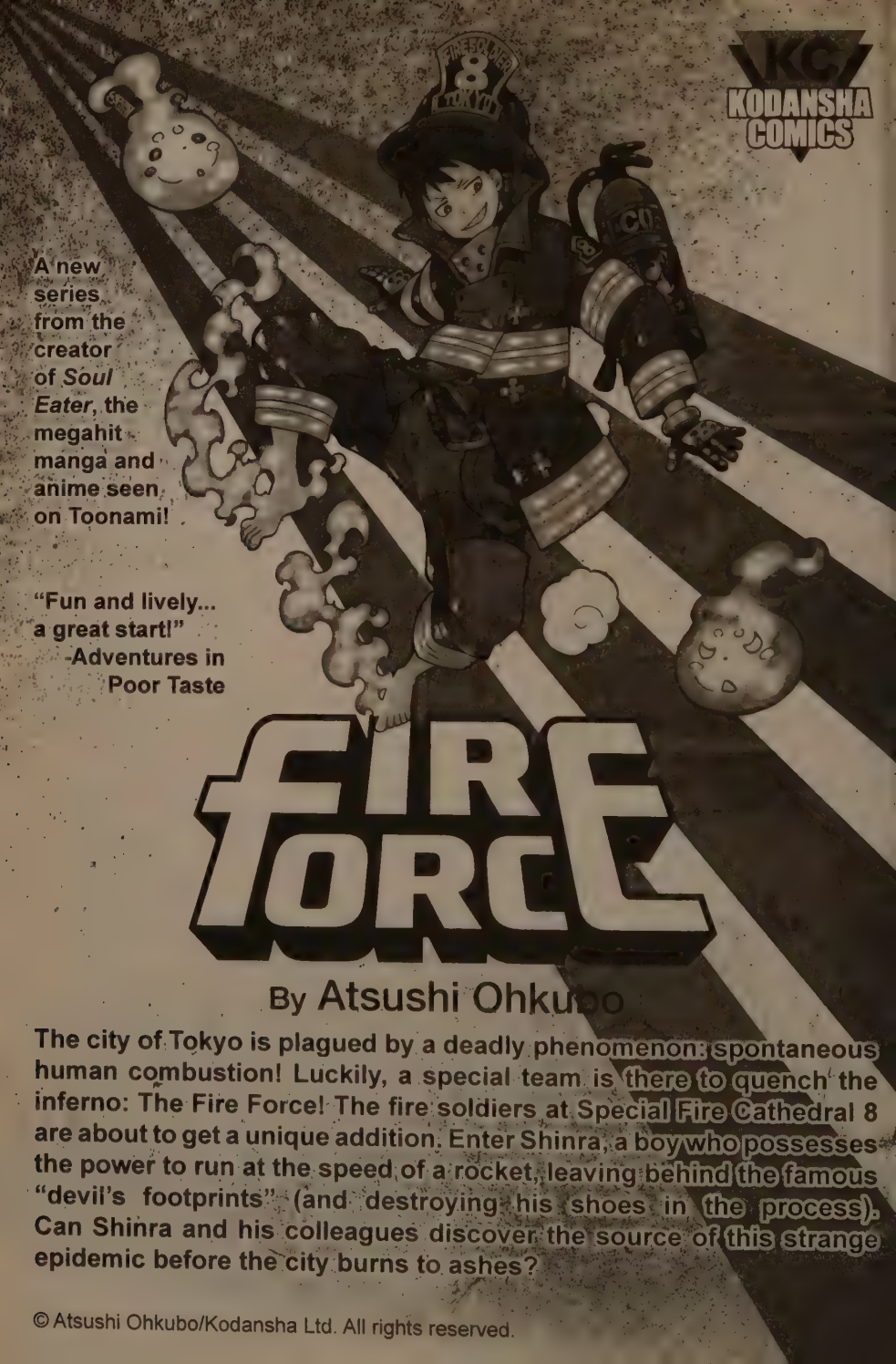

The city of Tokyo is plagued by a deadly phenomenon: spontaneous human combustion! Luckily, a special team is there to quench the inferno: The Fire Force! The fire soldiers at Special Fire Cathedral 8 are about to get a unique addition. Enter Shinra, a boy who possesses the power to run at the speed of a rocket, leaving behind the famous "devil's footprints" (and destroying his shoes in the process). Can Shinra and his colleagues discover the source of this strange epidemic before the city burns to ashes?

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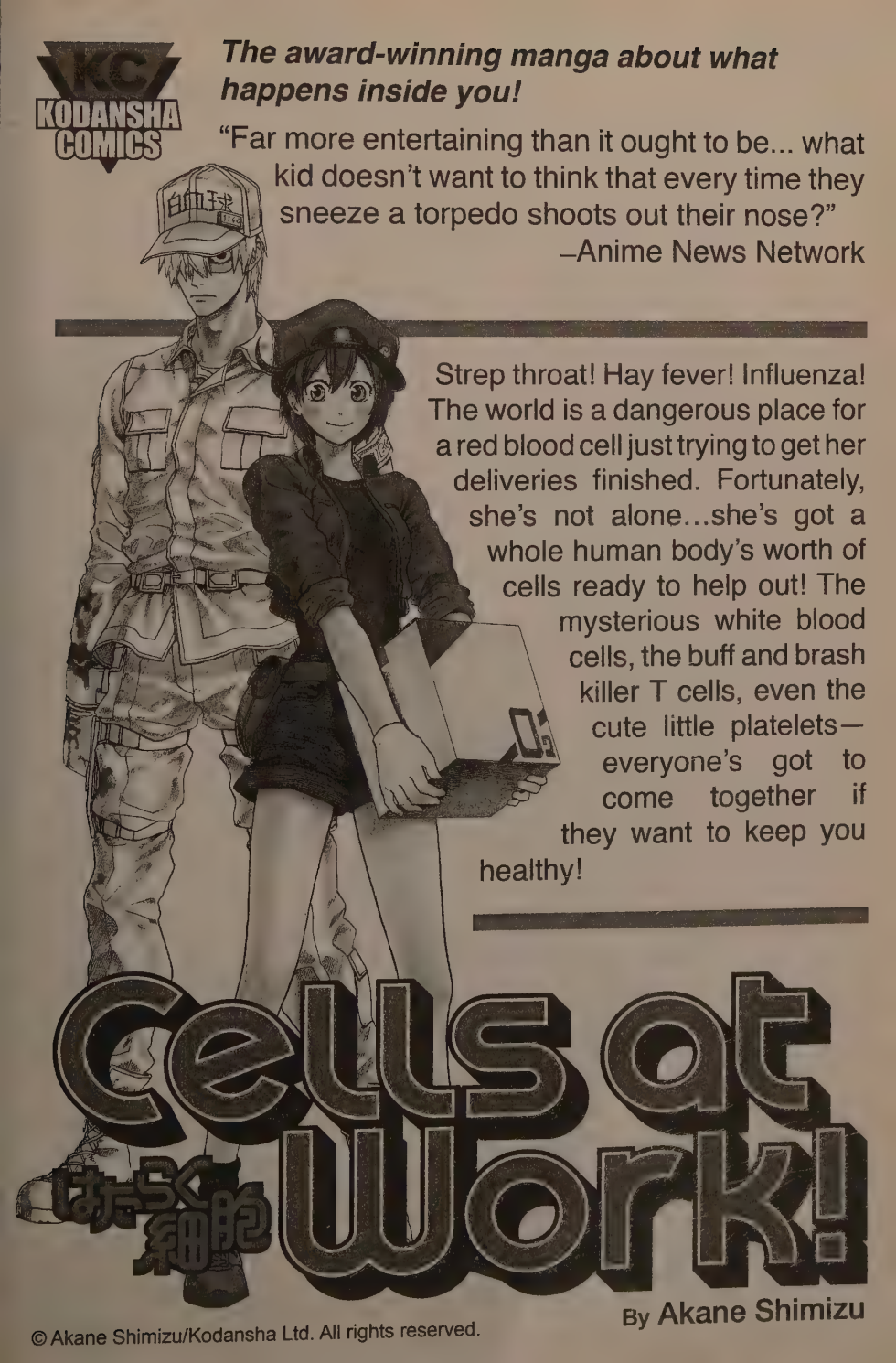
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The award-winning manga about what happens inside you!
"Far more entertaining than it ought to be... what kid doesn't want to think that every time they sneeze a torpedo shoots out their nose?"
–Anime News Network
Strep throat! Hay fever! Influenza! The world is a dangerous place for a red blood cell just trying to get her deliveries finished. Fortunately, she's not alone...she's got a whole human body's worth of cells ready to help out! The mysterious white blood cells, the buff and brash killer T cells, even the cute little platelets—everyone's got to come together if they want to keep you healthy!
Cells at Work!
はたらく細胞
By Akane Shimizu
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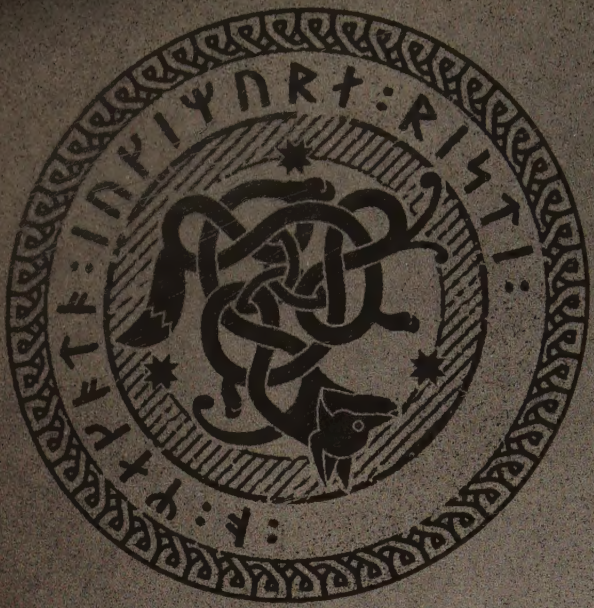

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r a Future

Thorfinn and his crew are on their way to Greece, the first leg of their expedition to Vinland. Having landed near Bergen, in Norway, Thorfinn is attacked by a bear, only to be saved by a fierce huntress named Hild. While sharing a meal together, Hild recounts how her village and family were massacred many years ago—a story Thorfinn knows quite intimately. Now, Thorfinn must face Hild and his own violent past in order to press forward. As his journey progresses, Thorfinn encounters more factions that do not share his vision, and a war in the name of Vinland may be looming on the horizon.

"A fascinating, violent, and moving story [that's] firmly among other timeless classics...Seriously, I don't know how many different ways I can say this manga is worth reading."

—*Kotaku*

"Gripping doesn't begin to describe Vinland Saga. 5 stars."

—*ICv2*

"Deeply engrossing...If you have any interest at all in Vikings, the Medieval period, or pirates, this is not a series you want to miss."

—*Anime News Network*

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